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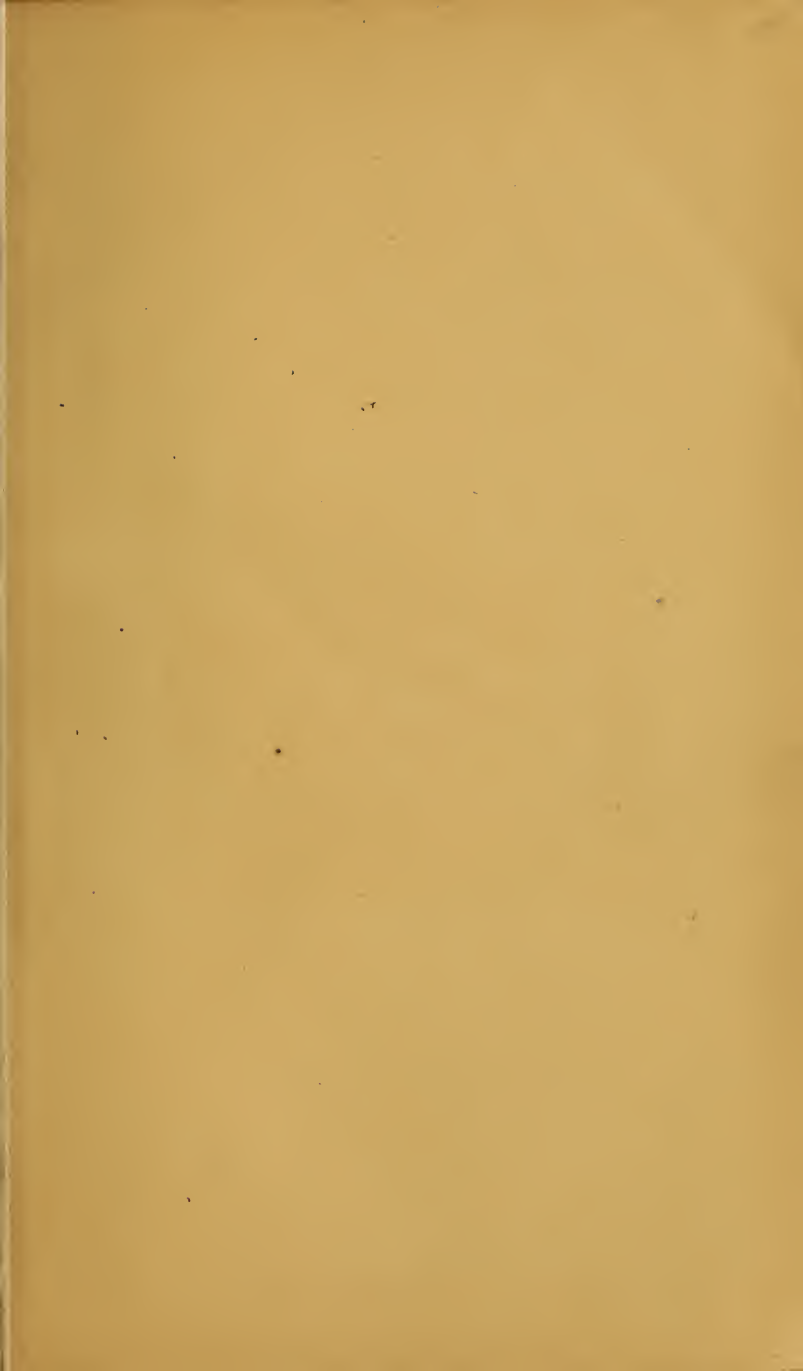
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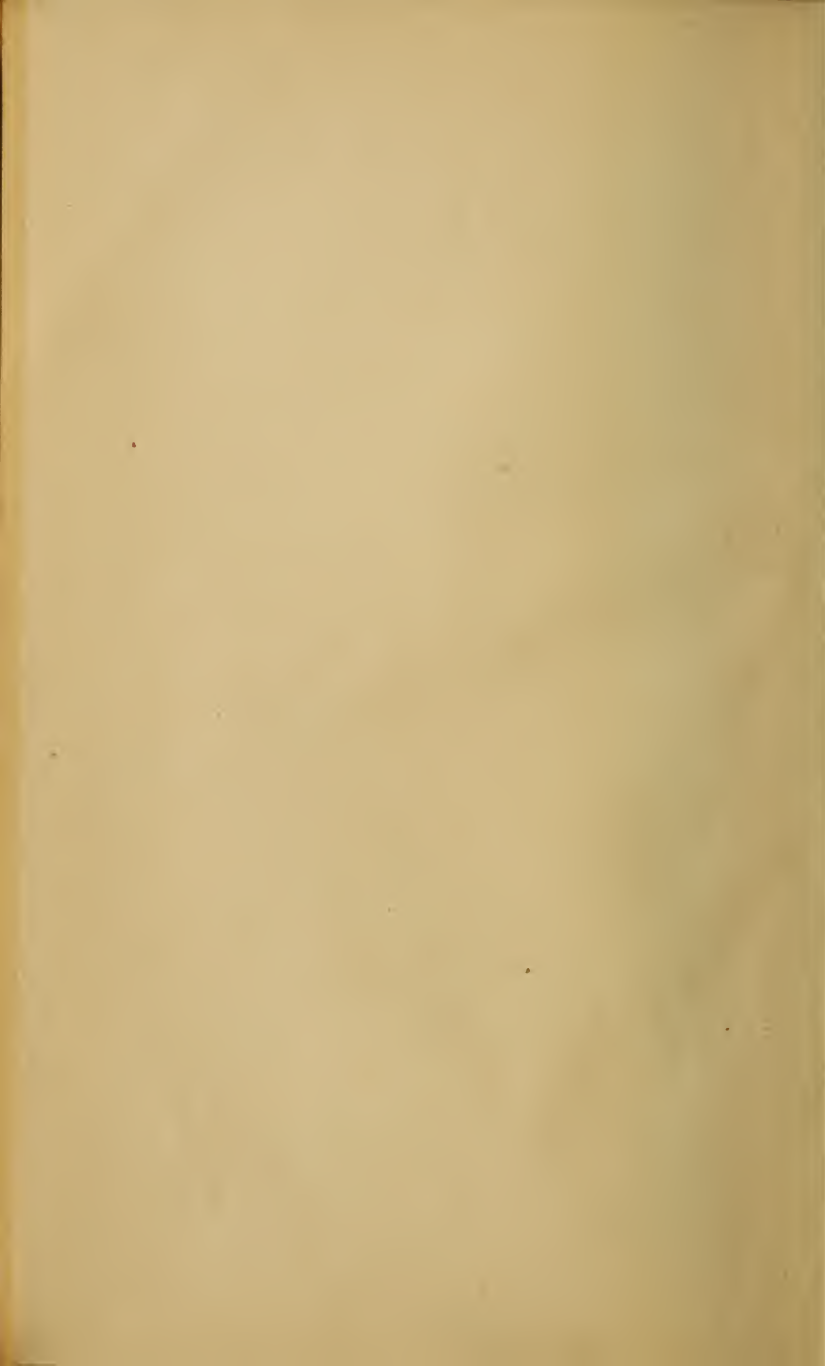
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A
LAMP TO THE PATH:

OR,

THE WORD OF GOD

IN

THE HEART, THE HOME, THE WORKSHOP
AND THE MARKET-PLACE.

BY W. K. TWEEDIE, D.D.

WITH A PREFACE
BY H. L. HASTINGS.



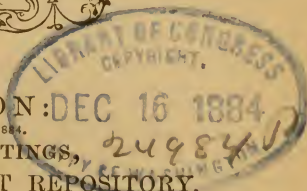
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PREFACE.

An intelligent and skillful physician, vigorous, athletic, and courageous, used to pursue his professional duties by day or night without anxiety or apprehension. Often he was desired to use a lantern in his nightly journeyings, but he laughed at the idea of danger, and went his way. One night, walking in some slippery path, he fell; an injury resulted, followed by long months of weariness and pain, and finally ending in his death. It was a sad fall, and all for want of a lamp. Bitterly did he regret his self-confidence when it was too late to remedy the mischief which it had occasioned.

There are multitudes to-day who are wandering in darkness and walking in unknown ways. They are full of strength, and hope, and courage; they do not think that *they* are in danger; though caution is commendable in others. This world is full of darkness; clouds and shadows curtain it on every hand; the glooms of the present, the uncertainties of the future, and the shadowy mysteries of the great Beyond, teach us with emphasis that we have need of light, and light which men can never give us. We may draw wisdom from the experience of the past, but what we *need* is a knowledge of the future. This

knowledge is not attainable through any human intelligence; it must come from Him who dwelleth in light, who is himself the light and life of men, and who sends out his light and his truth to lead and guide the sons of Adam. Of old it was written, "The commandment is a lamp, and the law is a light." The work of the servants of God has been to turn the Gentiles "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." It is "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ" which illuminates the darkness of this world; and those who embrace that gospel become the "children of the light," and are "not of the night nor of darkness." Christ was "the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" and "this is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Being thus illuminated, and made "light in the Lord," we are to "walk as children of the light;" and walking in the light as Christ is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.

Whatever course we may take in this life, whatever occupation we may follow, whatever profession we may choose, this divine light is needful to us all. We need God's word, as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, to show us how to walk. We need it in the daily affairs of life; we need it in the field, in the work-shop, and in the marts of business. We need the heavenly light to guide us in childhood, in youth, in manhood, in old age. We need it whether in poverty or in riches, in prosperity or adversity. We need it to show us what we ought to do to-day, and to

guide us in our hopes and expectations of the morrow.

Of old it was written, "the entrance of thy word giveth light." If we follow its guidance we shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Infidelity may threaten to break our lantern and to extinguish our light, but this is not what we want. It is not enough to extinguish the light we have; we need something better. Let the skeptic then tell us what is our duty here; let him unfold to us our destiny hereafter. Let him unravel the mysteries of human existence, let him give us present peace and an assurance of future blessing, and we will give attention to his words. But we wish no one to extinguish the light we have, and leave us in the darkness of a midnight without sun or star, to be bewildered by the phantom lights of a false philosophy, and beguiled into the quagmires of doubt and unbelief.

As we trace the history of ages past, we find that the destiny of individuals and of nations has been foreknown and foretold. We find that men of God have looked out upon the great empires and cities of antiquity and foreseen their overthrow and announced their doom. Following in the track of history, we find these predictions have been fulfilled and are fulfilling to-day. Babylon is in heaps; Tyre is a place where fishermen spread their nets; Egypt is the basest of kingdoms; Nineveh is empty, void and waste; Jerusalem is trodden under-foot of the Gentiles; Capernaum is cast down to the depths of oblivion; Israel have been led away captive into all nations, and are scattered through every land; and abundant evidences before our eyes show beyond the possibility

of doubt or question, that an Omniscient One has read the future, and that His Spirit has inspired the holy men of old who spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost, and revealed to mankind in advance the great events of human history.

We each need such a revelation as that; one which will tell us our present duties and our future prospects; one which will show us what is the will of God in this life, and what we may expect at His hand hereafter.

And such a revelation is given us, to inspire our hearts with hope, and to guide our feet in paths of safety. We have, in the written word of God, promises to cheer us, counsels to direct us, reproofs to admonish us; and a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well that we take heed, as "unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day-dawn, and the day-star arise."

It is this *Lamp to the Path* which a friendly hand extends to the wanderers and toilers in a benighted and sinful world; in the hope that many may turn their feet into God's testimonies, and their faces towards that city where the Lamb is the light, and where gloom and darkness are unknown; and prove in their own glad experience the truth of the word of Him who said, "He that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

H. L. H.

Boston, July, 1884.

A LAMP TO THE PATH.

CHAPTER I.

RELIGION IN THE HEART.

As years roll over us, and as our delusive expectations from earth and time slowly melt away, the complaint is very often heard that the world is growing worse. The truth is, that we are only then beginning to see the world in its true light. The visionary hopes which we once entertained have vanished, and the mirage is discovered to be neither a lake nor a stream. Perhaps we have had to eat the fruit of bitter disappointment or of blighted hope; and because our baseless anticipations have not been realized, we hasten to the conclusion that the world is fast sinking into hopeless corruption; that is, because the accounts which the Scriptures give have been found to be true, we are ready to suppose that the world is every year more and more distempered.

Hence the peevishness of some—hence activities cramped—hence querulous complaints—hence, in a few cases, the very spirit of Ishmael, whose hand was against every man, while every man's hand was against him.

Against this, however, as against every form of error, we are carefully warned in the Word of God. "Say not thou, What is the cause that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not inquire wisely concerning this." The truth is, they were *not* better—it is we that look at them from a different point, or try them by a different standard; in other words, *we* change. Our dreams have ended in the nothing whence they rose. We looked for only smiles and sunshine, and have had to grapple with very stern realities. We persisted in regarding this world as something very different from what the Word of God describes—a place where man's only sure portion is grief; but have at length discovered that the Word of God is true. Hence our sorrow and disappointment; hence the morbid complaints, and the cheerless repinings of age not seldom succeed to the visions, the dreams, and the delusions of youth.

But far from "saying that the former times were better than these," we feel that never was there an age in which so much was done as in ours, to help forward the great cause of truth and the reclaiming of the world to God. We know that vice has been unmasked in most appalling forms; but that is

because philanthropy has grappled with crime in its own dens, and dragged it into daylight, till thousands are revolted and appalled. We know that superstition is still trampling men in myriads into the dust, while the Word of God, and all that would elevate man from his deep degradation, is hated and put down wherever superstition has the power; but that is only because the systems which are antagonistic to the truth have been roused to more resolute efforts by the earnestness of the friends of man. And we know that oppression in many lands, is still goading multitudes to madness, immuring them in dungeons, or hurrying them to death; but that is only because the oppressor instinctively feels that the tide is rising which must eventually sweep him from his place.

The struggles now made, then, to perpetuate the reign of bondage, and doom men to mental and spiritual vassalage for some centuries more, are symptomatic of a waning, not a waxing cause; and the philanthropist may accordingly rejoice. Progression is the law of the universe; and all the powers of darkness cannot always, or long supersede it. If the bad be growing worse, the good are growing better, more strong, and more aggressive. They now realize their mission more than they did half a century ago. They are also more closely banded to promote it; so that, instead of joining in the cry that the former times were better than these, we are prompted to regard our day as signalized above

most by its schemes of earnest philanthropy, its plans of mighty scope, and its luminous designs for gathering in the nations to the sway of the Prince of Peace. *Now* abideth faith, hope, and love, beyond most of the ages which are past : faith, which takes hold of Omnipotence, and therefore cannot be baffled ; hope, which turns the future triumphs of the good and the true into present joy ; and love, which exults in the prospect of man's ultimate emancipation, according to the mind of God.

Meanwhile, all the crime beneath which our blighted earth is groaning, does not retard by a day the final completion of the eternal plan. Truth is spreading. Providence, hand in hand with grace, is slowly sapping the hoary systems which have long enthralled our race. Those who support the truth of God are more and more clearly ranged upon one side, and standing heart to heart in defence of the holy and the pure. Those who support error by oppression are more and more clearly ranged upon the other ; and we need not feel more assured that the sun will rise in the firmament to-morrow, or that rivers will continue to hasten to the ocean, than that truth is slowly triumphing, and error gradually erecting its own funeral pile. Symptoms of these results appear equally manifest in the Church and in the world.

But in every department, men must labour for these ends. As God has given to every one his measure of power, he is to put it forth—or of light, he is to let it shine. The Christian indeed is pre-

eminently a patriot. "Not one of us lives to himself;" and, in contemplating this subject, it has sometimes occurred to us to inquire whether the ministers of religion be sufficiently explicit, minute, and detailed in their lessons on the Sabbath. Over thousands of congregations each recurring week, there are diffused from the pulpit, doctrines the most ennobling, allied, in many cases, to lessons the most cogent and pure. Line upon line is employed, if, by any means, some may be saved, and the truth of God carried, by the Spirit's power, through the heart and the conscience to the hand and the life.

Withal, however, is there not reason to believe that there is still room for more precise and definite instructions than are sometimes conveyed? It is obviously one thing for a soul passively to acquiesce in a doctrine, and another thing to apply the truth to practice; to give it the control of the life, that man may be like-minded with God, and "pure as He is pure."—There have been men in all ages who held a faultless creed, yet led a godless life; who would tithe their mint, their anise, and cummin, and yet forget the weightier matters of the law. There have been not a few who took rank in the Christian Church, who could not be trusted in the market-place. Some who had fallen into the hands of the public prosecutor, have, with all the indignation of injured innocence, resented it as an offence, when those who watch for the spiritual good of men ventured to prevent them from polluting the holy place. In *one*

point of view, the world thus seems to be more careful or more high-toned than the Church; and that irresistibly suggests the question, *Can* a remedy be found for this sore evil? Without interfering for a day with the preaching of those doctrines which come from God as a light to guide us to Him, can aught be added to our present appliances, to rescue self-deluded men from their self-delusions, and at least render their number fewer in the different branches of the Holy Catholic Church?

The times appear to be specially favourable for promoting such an object. It is a characteristic of our age, for which we have high reason to be thankful to God, that the spiritual welfare of man is largely regarded. It is now clearly seen that the true interests of one class are the true interests of all. It is no longer antagonism, it is co-operation; to a large extent, it is brotherhood and harmony; it is liberal things devised on the one hand, and rejoiced in upon the other, at least in the land in which it is our blessedness to live. Grave men in the Church, and powerful men in the State, are busy here; nay, royalty itself, does not disown the employment. The prince co-operates with the peer, and both together hold out the hand, not of lordly patronage—that is cold and repulsive—but of brotherly-kindness and love.

We thus see at least the dawning of a state of things which has no doubt been too long retarded, to our shame; but which may be blessed by God, not

to introduce an Utopia, or a golden age; not to roll away the need of labour, or the lot of suffering—these are component parts of man's existence upon earth; but to soothe the sorrows, to dry the tears, and elevate the pursuits of those who might otherwise be woeworn and unfriended for life. **In a word,**

“The purple pride that scowls at wretchedness,”

is now scowled at in its turn, wherever the Word of God is free, and under its hallowing power, the brotherhood of man are becoming more manifestly brothers.

To help on these results, then, we would now try to bring sound doctrine into actual contact with men's souls, that it may produce sound practice. “The form of sound words” is to be prized above every earthly thing, but unless these words lead to right actions, they leave us still in the condition of Chorazin and Bethsaida of old. We would therefore try to take the truth of God in our hand; we would go under its escort, to the places of daily business or daily toil, there to apply the simple but often searching maxims which came from heaven to guide men through life on earth to glory.—We need expect no permanent amelioration for man except through the power and the prevalence of truth, and every attempt to elevate his nature to its true dignity by any other means, is either the effort of an empiric or the deception of an impostor. The simple theory of human progression, the only and exclusive

means of purifying man, is to make him like-minded with God again.

Now, as the mind of God can be learned only from his Word, everything but that will prove as unavailing as the labours of Sisyphus—

“ Up the high hill he heaves the huge round stone; ”

but it recoils in spite of all his toil, and so will every effort to elevate fallen man apart from the truth of God. We decline no fair ally. Nay, we would invoke the aid of all that is salutary either for mind or body. But unless the truth sit at the helm, and preside over all; unless the mind of God become the mind of man, man is still a degraded being; he is ignorant alike of his chief end and his chief good. In short, permanently to benefit man either for time or eternity without the knowledge of God, is a task as hopeless as that of Adam when he tried to hide among the trees of the garden.—Along the mountain-sides of some districts in this land we see traces of the culture of former generations at much higher levels than cultivation now reaches; but, deserted now as unproductive, these patches are re-claimed by the heath or the furze: they furnish no food at least for the use of man; and are not these significant emblems of the attempts to cultivate man without the knowledge of his God? The sepulchre may be white-washed, or sin covered over and concealed; but all is impurity, all is moral deformity still, in the eye of Him who judges righteous judgment.

We therefore take the Word of God as the grand rule, the sovereign panacea in our hand. We try to apply the system of mingled holiness, and mercy, and truth, and love, which is there disclosed, to guide the lives of mortals; and in prosecuting this design, the following is our plan. We try to show—

- I. Christianity in the *Heart*; for, unless it is found there, we need not expect to find it anywhere besides.
- II. Christianity in the *Home*. It must next appear there. Parents and children, masters and servants, or the employers and the employed, must all feel the genial or the curbing power of truth in their several places and relations.
- III. Christianity in the *Workshop*—from which its influence has too long been banished.
- IV. Christianity in the *Market-place*, the place of bargains and of busy trade.
- V. Christianity in the *Professions*: 1. The physician; 2. The lawyer; 3. The divine.
- VI. Christianity in our *ordinary social intercourse*; and,
- Finally, Christianity, as the crown and glory of man's existence upon earth.

Now, it is too manifest to require any discussion, that unless Christianity be planted in the heart, it cannot control the life. A religion merely for the hand has never done much for man. A creed which

teaches us only to cleanse the outside of the cup, has never succeeded in elevating us far, or making us kindred either with the pure or the lofty. A mere collection of doctrines, though each be scriptural and sound, has never availed to restore man to happiness and God. Merely to do as our fathers did, or hold, however tenaciously, a mere ancestral faith, is not the process by which the evil that is in man can be corrected. The soldier who is dragged to the battle-field is not likely to become a hero. The man who is carried to a foreign land in chains, seldom becomes one of its benefactors. He who needs compulsion and the rod ere he will acquire even the rudiments of learning, is not likely soon to become a ripe scholar. In every department, it is the willing mind, the earnest spirit, the hearty, zealous labourer, who achieves great results. The heart must be thrown into the pursuit, even though it were only some menial employment; and if that be not the case, then, however he may be engaged, man will either be disgusted and repelled, or doomed to drag a heavy chain amid his toil.

And this is pre-eminently the case in religion. It is with Him who looks on the heart that we have there to do—as is the heart, so is our religion. A new heart is accordingly the first and the grand desideratum. All the heart is to be given to God, and till that be conceded, we have not done obeisance to the first and great commandment. The law of God is to be written on the heart, or in truth we never

obey it. We may as well suppose that the ten commandments could guide the Hebrews, while these precepts were merely written on the tables of stone, far up amid the clouds of Sinai, as that the truth of God can profit, or illumine the soul, while it only floats in the understanding or the memory, without sinking into the heart. Nay, the thunders of Sinai, amid which the commandments were given, had scarcely died away, when the people who had heard them ceased to fear and quake—they set up a golden calf, and worshipped it as their God; and that forms one of the most instructive facts of history. It seems incredible to the man who does not know the guile which lurks in the heart, but it sheds a full though a lurid light upon the soul, in the eyes of him who has been guided by the truth through the intricate mazes of iniquity which exist within us.

Or, far more than this. Ten thousand times ten thousand may possess the gospel as well as the law. Not merely the authority, the power, or the terrors of the Lord may be brought to bear upon their minds—His love, his pity, and compassion, may also be revealed, and entreaties the most touching, or invitations the most free, may be mingled with promises the most cheering, and all may be employed to induce us to profit by them, while the heart may continue proof against them all. The truth of God may be no truth to us; His love in the Saviour may exercise no constraining power—and what is the reason? How are

we to explain the fact that the mind of God has no control over the minds of myriads of men, so that countless favours are received without awakening one grateful response? The reason is, truth was never stamped upon the heart. It is not understood that with the heart man believes unto righteousness. The first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy strength and mind," is not felt, and not obeyed; and men, in consequence, often drink up iniquity with the very Word of God open before them, soliciting their hearts and their affections for their Lord. They have his Word, but it is perverted to light them on the way to a more certain ruin.

This is all abundantly plain. If we have ever given so much as one solemn hour to God, to eternity, and the soul, it must be manifest that until the affections be set on things above, all else is vain. The heart is the citadel of the whole man, and until that be on the Lord's side, the enemy will find a stronghold there, from which no power on earth can dislodge him. Is a man living in a state of estrangement from God? Does the Heart-searcher know that that man is perpetrating sin and regardless of his soul? The explanation of all that is, that the heart has never been given to God. Christianity is not there. Truth is not there—its place is occupied by lies. The love of the Saviour is not there. The Word of God is a dead and a despised letter. The foundation of the spiritual fabric has never been laid. The first im-

pulse heavenward has not been given. The Spirit of God is not honoured in the heart as the temple where he delights to dwell. Religion at the best is a cold and formal thing. It only decorates the exterior, like trappings on a hearse. God is not in such a man's thoughts—Christ is not in his soul the hope of glory. The gulf between God and him is still a yawning void, and the eternal life which is placed within his reach is practically despised.

The illustrations of religion in the heart crowd upon us on every side. Let us contemplate a few, and place them in the way of contrast.

There is a man whose heart the Lord has touched with great love to souls. He learns that myriads are perishing in distant lands. That oppresses him with the weight of a personal woe; he takes his life in his hand and hastens away to tell the perishing of a Saviour. Now, in his work of faith, and labour of love, that man is dealing. Let us suppose, with two of the youth of a dark-skulled land. He is pressing on the conscience the claims of God, on the understanding his truth, and on the heart his love; but against all these appliances one of the two is stout-hearted, and steeled. There is no room in his soul either for the Spirit of God or his truth. Some idol has erected his temple there, and that idol, however hideous, is worshipped with the devotedness which is due only to God over all. Hence the heart is shut and fortified against the truth; hence the God of truth is rejected and disowned. The whole man is

preoccupied. The affections are engrossed by a worthless or revolting thing ; and as there was no room in the dwellings of men for the Saviour when he came to earth, there is no room in the soul of that man for truth, though it brings salvation and the fullness of joy in its train. The secret of the whole is, that the heart is not impressed ; it is never touched, and it therefore repels the approaches of Him who is love, as the granite rock repels the spray of the ocean.

But the case is different in regard to the other of the two : conscience in him feels the power of the truth ; it cannot deny the charges which are brought against it ; nay, it repeats and enforces them every one, and then begins the struggle for the control of the heart. Though the conscience be convinced, the heart may not be surrendered, and in consequence of that, a pain, an absolute distraction is sometimes produced—it has been described as the plucking out of a right eye.

Now, when does that struggle cease? When is that soul really surrendered to the supremacy of God? It is when the truth finds its way to the heart, and is planted there by the Spirit who revealed it. As long as it remained only in the conscience, it stimulated, it roused, it agitated, it produced only commotion or woe ; or, in the understanding, it instructed or delighted ; but when the truth of God passed through the conscience into the heathen heart, the whole man was speedily captured. There was now the

willing mind, there was now the pliant disposition. Idols were now abandoned. The Son of God was rejoiced in, and he who before had carried the badge of his idol on his very brow, as if to glory in his shame, now felt all the degradation of bowing down to an idol at all. The strongest earthly affection—that of a mother to a cherished son—might obstruct the path which led from idols to God, and other woes might come on the believer; but his heart had owned the majesty of truth, whatever it might entail. Truth, the truth of God, had taught him that there is something stronger, deeper, and more constraining than even the love of a mother to a son—namely, the love of the Saviour to the saved, and their love to Him in return—and thus, that soul, amid sorrows which are agonizing to flesh and blood, chooses the better portion. Like one who is truly wise, that man, lately so dark and idolatrous, now prefers the love of God to the love of a creature—and that is Christianity in the heart. That is religion taking the helm of life. That is truth occupying the citadel of the soul. That is God enthroned. That is conscience obeyed. That is reason re-occupying the sphere from which it was banished at the fall. That is the promise fulfilled, “A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you.”

Or contemplate another example of Christianity in the heart, as the root and fountain of all that is lovely and of good report in the life.

Another man has gone with no less love to souls

than the former, to win some of the far-fallen Jews to the Saviour. In that work he encounters insult upon insult, and everything but Christian faith, and Christian hope and love, would there faint and fail. He also is surrounded by crowds of inquirers or objectors—let us select two for their contrast. One of them is full of hereditary hatred to the truth as it is in Jesus; and that very name which is to the Christian a strong tower, is to that dark-souled man a provocative to wrath and spiteful passion—And why? Because that heart is pre-occupied. That man has never once seen the presented truth, so thick is the veil which blinds him; he has never once felt its power, so hard is the incrustation which envelopes his heart. The love and pity, as well as the holiness and truth of God, are shut out from his soul, for the repugnance and the recoil of the heart drive them utterly away. He thus furnishes another example of the fact, that there does not exist in all the world, a more intense antagonism than that of man's polluted heart to the pure truth of God.

But the other of the two inquires—he is willing at least to ascertain what a Christian is. He listens, and the great truth which is the basis of all personal religion—conviction of sin in the sight of God—begins to be felt. Whether Christianity be true or not, that man discovers, from his own Hebrew Bible, that he is a sinner. He perceives that Judaism, even in all its glory, could not take away sin, and much less now when it is worn out, or not the

shadow or the echo of its former self. In that state of soul, that man comes nearer to Jesus of Nazareth than he had ever done before. He reads; he marks; he inwardly digests; he begins to pray. The Redeemer's history now becomes full of meaning. "He was despised, and we esteemed him not"—"He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities"—"The Lord has laid on him the iniquities of us all"—"They shall look on him whom they have pierced"—These, or texts like these, now begin to be seen in the light which the Spirit of God sheds on them, or felt in the power which that Spirit imparts to truth, and they flash upon the earnest man's mind with a meaning which he never saw before.

That man now begins, then, to feel that the truth is just what he as a sinner needs; and in the train of that, it begins to take possession of the heart. It gives a new tone or a new colour to his life. By securing the command of the heart, it converts a Jew into a new creature in Christ. He begins to glory in what was once a stumbling-block, the Cross; or to be ashamed of what was once his glory, his self-righteousness; and as the aspect of the earth when the sun is shining in the radiance of day is different from its aspect when midnight reigns, that man's soul is different now from what it lately was. Christianity is in the heart; and as the blood is propelled from the heart to the extremities, spreading life and activity as it flows, truth, the truth which the Spirit teaches now circulates through the whole inner man,

reducing everything there to the obedience that is in Christ. The waste places are cultivated. The spiritual fabric is founded, and the great Master-builder will in due time perfect the whole.

Or, without referring either to Heathen or to Jew, we might select some two in our own favoured land for a contrast. We might picture an assembly of men met in the house of God to worship the King Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible, and single out two of the worshippers to illustrate religion in the heart; and let us thus single out two. They worship side by side. They hear the same voice—they listen to the same gospel, the same appeals to the conscience, the same lessons for the understanding, the same glad tidings for the heart. They are pointed to the same Saviour, and are equally told of his power and his willingness to save. Redemption now, and not to-morrow—redemption perfect and complete, without waiting for any supplement from man—redemption for “the ungodly,”* and not for those who have already repented; in a word, salvation *freely*, salvation *immediately*, and salvation *completely*, is offered or pressed on the notice of each of the two, according to the Word of the Eternal.

But amid this affluence of mercy, this plenitude of love, one of them continues indifferent, hardened, and without God. Every new appeal is resisted, and so thickens the incrustation which has gathered

* See Rom. v. 6, and compare Acts v. 31.

round the heart. All within is dead and cold. Religion brings no joy. It seems a system to fetter, and not to emancipate; and as that man cannot both sin and be a Christian, his heart continues shut against the influence which would separate him from his sins. The secret of all this is, that that heart is still the victim or the dupe of lies. There is no Christianity admitted into it. The truth of God is kept far away from the centre of man's being. Lest that truth should enter the heart, it is kept carefully guarded; it is crowded with worldly cares, or plunged into worldly follies, but left dreary and desolate as to all that is divine; the waters of Marah are never sweetened there; the soul is perishing with redemption in its offer; it is self-doomed to woe and to bitterness, while the Spirit of God through his Word is beckoning it to glory and to honour.

The other of the two worshippers, however, has found out that "one thing is needful." He has listened to conscience. He has taken counsel with right reason. He has surrendered the heart to God, and that is the decisive moment when man's name is written in the book of life. It is then that the kingdom of God begins to be within us, then that we learn both how wayward is the heart, and how mighty is the grace of God to subdue it. Light now radiates where all was dark before; joy is now felt where all was cheerless; and the new-born sensation of spiritual freedom brings a presage of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

And what renders it more needful to urge on this ascendancy of truth in the heart is, the opposition which it is sure to encounter in the world. While we sail down the world's stream, we may glide pleasantly along, and need neither the canvass nor the oar; but the moment we attempt to stem it, the struggle and the conflict begin: we must either earnestly contend, or be carried down to ruin. What is it that produces thunder? It is the meeting of contraries, or fire and water. What is it that produces the earthquake? It is a similar cause—the meeting of contraries, or substances which cannot quietly co-exist. What is it that occasions war, and massacre, and devastation? It is still a similar cause. It is passion in collision with passion. It is the tyrant seeking to oppress the free. It is ambition grasping at more and more, and trampling upon all who oppose its pleasure—and the same law obtains in religion. Why are God's people often of all men the most miserable? Whence come persecutions? They come because holiness in the godly and sin in the world have come into collision. The will of God is opposing or protesting against the passions of men, and on that account there is war on the one hand, produced by inflamed passion on the other.

A church, a flock, for farther example, has long been afflicted with an unconverted ministry, and all is peaceful there, for all is spiritual death. But there comes a change. A converted ministry is raised up, and now begins the collision between spiritual life

and spiritual death. Ere the truth get access to the heart, it must fight every inch of the way.

Or there is a family where, up to a certain period, all is unmitigated worldliness; not one soul is there alive to God.—But in His sovereign time one member is converted, and then perhaps begin the collision and the strife. The world resents the intrusion or the rebuke implied in spiritual decision; and if that heart will love God's pure truth, it must zealously contend.

Or there is an individual soul. It has long slumbered, as the world does, without God and without hope. No compunction has roused it, and no alarm been felt. But something at last occurs to disturb that false peace. Truth enters the conscience. It operates there like a visit from the living to the catacombs of Egypt, when the night-birds are disturbed in crowds, and threaten, by their multitudinous flutterings, to blind or to destroy the intruder. Thus, if truth will take possession of a heart for God, it must encounter and vanquish a thousand enemies. In that conflict man needs the whole armour of God, for he has to fight the good fight of faith. His enemies may be those of his own household, or even his own heart; and nothing but the free Spirit of the living God can make man sure of victory in that contest.

Perhaps it is superfluous to occupy so much time in illustrating what is, in truth, so plain. Yet, as many overlook this plainness, it should be urged in

line upon line, that if we would begin aright, we must begin at the heart, out of which flow the issues of life. One of the most earnest prayers in the Bible is, "Create in me a clean heart, O God,"* and one of its most emphatic or comprehensive promises is, "A new heart will I give you."† And would men learn that simple lesson, did they in their several places and relations as superiors, inferiors, or equals, seek to begin at the beginning, and have the heart right with God through the new-creating power of His Spirit, O how sweetly would the whole framework of society soon be adjusted! how surely would "all the building, fitly framed together, grow into an holy temple in the Lord!" The Church would be more pure. The world would not be so often cheered in its ungodly ways, by the example of men professing the truth, but holding it in unrighteousness, because they are destitute of Christianity in the heart, where it should ever reign as the unchallenged and unrivalled queen.—There are some ruins of ancient cities now buried deep under water. When the waves above them are calm, these ruins can still be seen, though centuries have rolled away since they were first submerged. Yet who would regard these waste places as the abodes of living men? Who would speak of them as the haunts of the happy? Nay, life has vanished from them; all that ever lived there have been for centuries destroyed. And, in the same way, the heart that is sunk in worldliness or

* Ps. li. 10.

† Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

saturated with what is earthly and sensual, is cut off from all communion with the living God; it is dead to holiness and Him.

We cannot glance at the lives of godly men without noticing the prominence which belongs to this subject of religion in the heart. Their first aspiration is for the friendship of God, and their next, their perpetual longing is to have the heart right with Him; "to keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." We open the life of one man of God at random. He says, "An inward sweet sense of divine things at times came into my heart, and my soul was led away in pleasant views and contemplations of them." "The sense I had of divine things would often of a sudden kindle up, as it were, a sweet burning in my heart, an ardour of soul that I know not how to express." "I was almost constantly in ejaculatory prayer wherever I was. Prayer seemed as the breath by which the inward burning of my heart had vent." "My former delights never reached the heart, and did not arise from any sight of the divine excellence of the things of God." "My heart panted after this, to lie low before God as in the dust, that I might be nothing, and God might be *all*; that I might become as a little child." "Oftentimes in reading the Holy Scriptures, every word seemed to touch my heart; I felt a harmony between something in my heart and those sweet and powerful words." *

* Jonathan Edwards.

Another says, "O God, impress more deeply on my heart thine exceeding great and precious promises, that I may perfect holiness in thy fear." "Though God's pure Word is presented to worldly men in ever such a variety of ways; though the provision be ever so daintily served up, none of them relish it at heart. As well might the preacher have the restless and ungovernable waves of the sea before him, and think to control them with the rod of Moses, or the words of Christ, 'Peace, be still.'" "In his earliest years he had many pure, tender feelings, and stirrings of his heart concerning God, and the texts inscribed on the church walls of his native town, from the Epistle to the Romans, concerning death, sin, righteousness, and the crucifixion, produced in him, as a mere child, emotions of great joy and peace, and left upon him very profitable and lasting impressions." "How may I know that I am become an heir of heaven? How may I know that God is in me of a truth? When I have the earnest of the inheritance, that is, when I am habitually led by the Spirit of God, so as to walk in love, with my heart crying to him, Abba, Father! and listening to every whisper of his Holy Spirit."*

Another says, "My heart was utterly averse from spirituality. Sometimes, through the force of convictions, I was indeed brought for some time to aim at getting my mind fixed upon heavenly things, and

* John Albert Bengel.

kept on the thoughts of them; but my heart being still carnal, I wearied of this bent and of this forcible religion; it was intolerable to think of being always spiritual." "I abominated the more gross breaches of all the commands, and disliked open sins. But, meanwhile, my heart was set upon the less discernible violations of the same holy law." "Under a searching ministry, the Lord began to give me some discoveries of the more secret and spiritual evils of my heart. He carried me 'into the secret chamber of imagery,' to let me see what my heart did in the dark." "Though sin might prevail, my heart was not with it as before; I found another sort of opposition made to it." "I have looked on death as stripped of all things pleasant to nature. I have considered the spade and the grave, and everything that is in it terrible to nature; and under the view of all these, I found that in the way of God they gave satisfaction—not only a rational satisfaction, but a heart-engaging power attending it, that makes me rejoice."*

One of the profoundest thinkers that ever lived has said, "There are only two kinds of persons who can properly be styled reasonable: those who serve God with all their heart, because they know Him; and those who seek Him with all their heart, because they know him not."†.

—But it is needless to prolong such illustrations.

* Thomas Halyburton.

† Pascal.

Human nature, revelation, and daily experience, agree in testifying to the necessity of planting the truth in the heart of man, if it is to control his life. For that purpose the Spirit of God is sent to take the truth from the sacred page, where He himself has placed it, and stamp it on the soul. And O, what man consents to sacrifice, by keeping truth in the outer court as the Gentiles were kept in the outer court of the Jewish Temple! What holy joy! What hopes and consolations! What communion with God he forfeits! Or, how blind the world to its own best interests, when the truth is kept cold and shivering, apart from the soul and the heart! How would the woes of a groaning world be soothed—how would our biting and devouring of each other cease—how would swords be beat into ploughshares, and spears into pruning-hooks, were truth enthroned in the heart, and suffered to control the life! A single sentence of that truth, honestly believed and obeyed, would soon revolutionize a world; and should not every Christian therefore be busy, earnest, and solemn, in spreading the truth; in seeking to have it planted deep in his own soul first, and then in the souls of all?

Moreover, the world is very solemn now, it is earnest and devoted; it is perfectly convinced, however baseless the conviction, that time is all in all. For example, mark that atheist. They who do not know the dark depths of man's heart will not believe that a soul so monstrous can exist; but as if to prove the truth of the Word of God, a bold blasphemer has stood forth

to deny God's existence, and challenged Him to prove that the impious one was wrong, by striking him dead upon the spot. Or mark that knot of infidels. They are assembled to devise the means of spreading their poison, and import additional supplies from other lands, because the home growth is not sufficient. Or mark that group of papists. They are daily plotting the suppression of God's truth, the enslaving of man's soul, and deepening the darkness which already envelopes him. All, all are earnest, zealous, sanguine in the pursuit of evil—and shall they who hold the truth be alone lethargic, listless, apathetic? The infidel has been heard to declare, that if he believed what Christians profess to believe, he would be far more zealous than they. In truth, that infidel sees that the man whom the world stigmatizes as a religious enthusiast is the only consistent Christian. If I believe that every sin tends to eternal perdition, can I be consistent in my belief, if I do not repress sin by every proper means within my power? If I believe that none but Christ can save so much as one single soul, can I be consistent in my belief, if I am not ready to spend and be spent in winning souls to Christ? On that maxim the Christian indeed will act; and when that spirit is ascendant, we shall see far more done than has yet been attempted to soothe men's sorrows, to dry men's tears, and ease their aching hearts.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGION IN OUR HOMES.

It is a fatal and a paralysing mistake to suppose that the religion of Jesus is to be kept for certain days, or occasions, or places, and laid aside or neglected at other times. It is not meant to give solemnity merely to a few hours of the Sabbath, or a few deeds of the hand; and while we can be satisfied with that view of religion, we have not begun to feel its power, to partake of its joy, or enter into its spirit. It would not be more unreasonable to suppose that the body needs the vital air to breathe only on certain occasions, or that the eye needs the light of heaven to see only at peculiar seasons, than that man can dispense at times with the truth of God as his guide, and monitor, and friend. If there be a moment at which man is not prone to go astray, then for that moment he may dispense with truth. If there be a single breath during which man is not dependent upon God, for that breath he may lay aside God's pure and holy word.

But it is the dictate of reason, the moment it is illumined from on high, that the truth should take the control of the conscience, the understanding, and the heart, in all we find to do. It is to preside over thought, word, and deed. It is to direct us not

merely in actions which are strictly and properly religious, like praise, and prayer, and public worship. It is to give a religious character to all that we attempt; and one great reason why religion is often despised is, that not a few of those who profess to hold the truth forget its righteous claims in their dealings with their fellow-men.

There is a parent sitting by the couch where his first-born is stretched—a corpse. As he gazes on the pale features, more beautiful, he thinks, than ever now, because death has turned them into marble, what consolation can the truth yield to him, if it has been his habit to confine its influence to a corner, a fragment of life, instead of regarding it as the sunshine or the vital air of the soul?

There is a sister weeping by the grave of one who has just become a prey to corruption. Her heart is lonely, and stricken, and sore—she feels it would be a relief could it break. And what blessing can the truth, the very truth as it is in Jesus, yield to that wounded spirit, if it has been its habit to seclude and sequester religion, to keep it apart from the business of life, like some portion of our dress, meant only for solemn seasons or for holidays?

There is another. The hand of death is on him. He cannot be blind to its approach. He *must* take home the warning, “Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live.” And of what avail to that man is the very truth which came from heaven, if it has been kept at a distance from the heart, like

something which we dislike or dread? Can a name, an echo, a phantom, a shadow, really avail that dying man's soul?

Or there is another still. The Spirit of God has fastened conviction upon his conscience, and he feels now what it is to be a sinner. "What must I do to be saved?"—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" now embody the fears of his awakened spirit; and to soothe that spirit, or hush these fears, what avails the solemn ceremonial or the decent form, while that is all? Can a form atone for guilt? Can a pageant cleanse the conscience? Can some occasional observance of a religious rite operate like a charm, and either silence the demands or uphold the purity of the law of God? Nay, "miserable comforters are they all." It is truth in the heart guiding to Him who is the truth itself, which alone can yield the troubled conscience peace.

And, to name no more: There is a youth removed from the watchful guardianship of his father's home. The crowded city has become his busy abode, and its endless temptations must now be encountered. He must hear the grossness of the licentious, and endure the scoff of the godless. He must brave the assaults of those who have grown hardened in guilt. He must resist those who have trampled upon conscience, and forgotten that there is either a death before them, or a God to meet. And what will give that tempted youth the victory? An occasional glance at the Word of God? An occasional petition

to his throne? An occasional visit to his house? To ask these questions is to answer them: That man consents to be deceived and undone who is willing to be only occasionally devout, occasionally seeking God, occasionally a Christian.

We have tried, then, in the spirit of these remarks, to show that if the truth of God is to regulate the life of man, it must be planted in his heart. Afraid lest the services of the sanctuary and the lessons of the Sabbath be not sufficiently practical and precise, we are following men into the different spheres in which they move, there to apply the truth at once as a touchstone and a guide—a test to man's soul, and a light to man's path. A creed which only decorates the exterior cannot be that of the people of God. If it produce no beauty in the soul, no benefit in the life, it is a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

And our next topic is—Religion in our Homes. If it be planted in the heart by the Spirit of holiness, it will soon spread outward and cover the life with its beauty. Like the widening circles on a pool whose smoothness a pebble has disturbed, the wave of truth flowing from the heart, first touches those among whom we constantly move; and in no sphere can the genuine power of godliness on the one hand, or spurious pretences on the other, be more easily or promptly discovered. A man is in God's eye just what he is in the bosom of his family.

Perhaps we can best and most simply introduce this topic by referring to an example. To find it, we go

straightway to the fountain-head, and fix attention on "the father of the faithful." Among the things which signalized that remarkable man, was his strict regard to the fear of God in his home. "I know him," it is said by the Searcher of hearts; "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment."—Abraham was selected to introduce a new epoch in the mighty movements of Providence, a new stage in that grand procession which is carrying the generations of men forward to their eternal lot; and one reason assigned for that selection is, that he would cultivate home-religion, or cause the fear of the Lord to circulate through his tents. Now every word that is employed to describe this epoch-making man deserves to be studied—it appears a very picture of the patriarch or the priest of home. He who blesses the habitations of the righteous, says, "*I know him.*" It is the Omniscient that speaks, and there can be neither hypocrisy on the one hand, nor deception on the other. "I know him that he will *command.*" There will be no betraying of the truth on his part, no yielding to any guide but one. There is a law, and Abraham will keep it. He is answerable to the Law-giver, and he will act on that conviction.

And "I know him that he will command *his children.*" Not blind affection; not that kind of indulgence which is the veriest cruelty; not that disorder which renders the young the masters of the

old: Abraham will *command* his children. He and they are the subjects of a common Lord. His functions are purely executive. The *Lord* is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; and parents and children alike are to be ruled by Him. This should equally prevent parental oppression on the one hand, and filial disobedience on the other, and when the laws which we obey are enacted by our Father who is in heaven, when they flow from Him whose heart is love, what but blessings can be the lot at once of him who administers and of those who obey them? By the combined influence of authority and affection, Abraham was thus to rule his home. Like David, he was to walk within his house with a perfect heart, and that is the method by which parents

“May sun them in the light of happy faces.”

If the Holy One has given us rules for the guidance of all, these rules form the standard from which there can be no sinless swerving, and the first principles of holiness have yet to be learned where God's will is not thus paramount.

And, moreover, his *household* as well as his children, were to be controlled by the patriarch. He is not one of those who forget that their dependents or domestics have souls, and therefore take no interest in them as immortal beings. He did not act as if there were one God for the master and another for the servant; one rule for the superior,

another for the inferior ; one way for the lordly, and another for the lowly. Nay, the father of the faithful, combining faith and works in their proper places, "will command his household;" will take the control of it, and see that everything there is done decently and in order. There will be no tampering with a servant's conscience, and as little conniving at his transgressions. The ten commandments were not yet given ; but the spirit of them was a part of Abraham's believing nature, and he sought to have duty done wherever he had influence, alike by superiors, inferiors, and equals. In a word, like Cornelius after him, he feared the Lord, with all his house.

And farther : the rule, the standard at once for master and servant, is given, "*They shall keep the way of the Lord.*" Every other path is that of the destroyer ; it tends to death, for "the curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked." The question which we should ask in regard to our home religion is not, What is done by others ? What do men think ? What will the world tolerate ? What will be most conducive to present ease or peace ? but, What has God said ? When that has been ascertained, every departure from it is just a wandering into the way of sorrow. Neither parent nor child, nor any member of a household, need expect to prosper in any path except the way of the Lord ; and to anticipate prosperity or peace in any other, just shows that reason is still eclipsed, that conscience is still seared or dormant, that the mind of God is not our mind, that

we are still doing as Adam did when he sought happiness in wandering from his Maker.

Such, then, are the principles which lie at the foundation of all family rule; these would make our homes a Bethel, and our hearts a shrine. Wherever such fear of God reigns in the soul, accompanied with the love of Christ, there will be peace and holy joy; but every other principle will leave our hearts and homes unblest. Tacitus tells us that "many find it a harder task to govern a family than to rule a province;" and it may be so where God's law is not known or not regarded. But that law itself is abundantly clear, and the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein. Every family that calls on the name of the Lord should spread out his Word before them, and ask, What has God said? for that is the rule from which neither waywardness on the part of children, nor engrossment on the part of parents, can warrant our departure.—It is computed that the household of Abraham could not contain less than a thousand souls. Living as he did in the rank of an Eastern prince, his retinue was such as we can scarcely understand; and yet, concerning him and his household, Omniscience says: "Com-manded by Abraham, they will keep the way of the Lord." Like Joshua while placed at the head of a migrating nation, and burdened with the care of millions, his resolution was, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Religion was to be planted in the heart of society, that is, in the sacred

circle of home ; and thence, like the banyan tree, was to spread, and spread, till it had covered or encircled the whole.

And here, as we pass along, it may serve as a warning to some, if we glance at that infidelity which characterizes the schemes of some pretended friends of education and the young. They would divorce religion from education. They would let children grow up without any training in the fear of God. They would develope mind. They would impart secular knowledge ; but the knowledge of salvation, of sin, and of redemption from its woe, its bondage, and defilement, they would not name. Passion may grow rampant ; the world may be ascendant in the heart, the mind, and all the powers of man, yet youth is to be left unchecked by any heavenly warning, untaught by any heavenly lesson ! Now, waiving every other objection to this scheme, we say that it is unequivocally and utterly infidel ; it should on that account be branded with the reprobation of all who love the rising race, on the one hand, who know their perils on the other, and who, moreover, feel assured that nothing but the truth of God can either make man savingly wise or keep him so. If God's favour be a dream, and man's soul only organized matter, destined to pass away as other matter does, it is needless to be very zealous for one scheme of training in preference to another. But if man be immortal, and if his immortality *can* be blessed, only by having his mind in harmony with God's, then the training of

the young in the good way of the Lord is a matter of solemn obligation. Man has no choice here. To neglect that way in training, is to arrogate a wisdom superior to God's, and the man who does that is perhaps blindly and unconsciously, but not the less certainly, evading God's truth and perpetuating the misery of man's soul.

But we are too general. Ere we can plant and foster religion in our homes, we must descend into more minute details.

Parents here demand the first place, and as the basis of all that can be addressed to them, we observe that the supreme, we might say the single maxim which should guide them in all they do, in regard to the religion of home, is suggested by the question, "What is the way of the Lord?" Parents who do not walk in that way themselves, who find no pleasure there, and feel under no constraint either to seek to enter upon it, or advance after they have entered, will feel no obligation to lead their children or their household there. That is the secret of our godless families, our prayerless homes, our nurseries of folly and of woe. The fountain which should send forth sweet water is poisoned. The tree which should bear grapes produces only wild berries, and society is at once crowded and corrupted by the ungodly children of ungodly parents.

But wherever a parent has felt the value of a soul, and loves it—wherever he has found out the good way of the Lord, and tried to walk in it—his

guiding inquiry at every step will be, How does the God of all our families instruct us to act? What is his mind at any given point? That once ascertained, it becomes our only rule; and where it is not our only rule, religion in that home is not supreme—all besides is sin. “The nurture and admonition of *the Lord*”—“The fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom”—“The way in which they ought to go”—These, and similar portions of God’s revealed mind, point at once to the sovereign rule. True, difficulties innumerable meet us in that way. The iniquity that is bound up in the heart of the young—the love of folly, and the hatred of wisdom—devotedness to baubles—indifference to things eternal and divine, with all the array of evil influences which assail or ensnare the young in a world where God is unknown, dishonoured, or forgotten, may augment the godly parent’s difficulties. But difficulties are not the rule of duty. They are only a call to prayer, to dependence on the heavenly Teacher, and, in his strength, to steadfast opposition to all that is wrong, and affectionate encouragement of all that is right and true. The Word of God is thus our only rule; to consult another is to listen to the evil heart of unbelief.

It has no doubt come to pass in our day, that that standard is set aside by many parents who dislike the holiness of the Bible, and would prefer some freer scope to sin than it will tolerate. They overlook the holy requirements of God, and there are

many homes where He is never worshipped. There are children who never heard their parents pray. There are domestics whose souls never drew forth one anxious thought from their employers. The religion of home is, in short, a discarded thing, and souls are trained in ungodliness by those who should watch over them as over their most precious possession. Now, it is needless to add that Christianity is exiled from such homes; the truth, the Spirit, the love of God, are not presiding there. There may be individual Christians under these roofs, who sigh and cry for the reigning ungodliness; or who, in some retired place, have set up an altar where God in Christ is worshipped, as has been done in a miserable cellar, in a home where no other place of prayer was allowed. Such homes, however, are not Christian homes. The practice of Abraham is there reversed: "The way of the Lord" is not observed; and when men wander from it, what can the end be but labour and sorrow?

But to a parent who really loves his children, and who would do as the great patriarch did, it would be an important boon, could a brief directory be suggested for Christianizing our homes, or rendering them places where prayer is wont to be made. How shall we subdue the spirit of the world, which is ever seeking to insinuate its deadening influence? How shall we be prepared to do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, in our homes? These are questions which enter deeply into the well-being of society;

and yet no brief answer can be given applicable to every case. Every parent, impressed with a solemn sense of his own responsibility to God, must here seek daily grace for daily guidance, and make each difficulty, as it rises, a new errand to the throne. Thus only will the religion of the Redeemer preside in our homes, and fit us for "the house of the Lord for ever." Perhaps the only universal rule that could be given is this: In regard to any action, any pleasure, any practice in our homes, let the question be asked, with the Bible open before us, "Is this the way of the Lord? Is it thus that I can train my children in the way in which they ought to go?" The answer to that, honestly sought and honestly found in prayer to God for light and guidance, would detect many an unholy practice, or repress many an unholy plan. It would make the religion of our homes the religion of Jesus, of purity and peace—the guide who came from heaven to lead us to its glory and its God. It would infuse a right spirit into our catechisings and all our details, and end in raising up godly households in the land.

Blind parental affection ranks among the greatest obstructions to the religion of home. It prompts indulgences which should be at once put away, and prevents correction where correction is an ordinance of God. It seems to turn the hearts of parents to their children according to the promise, but it is, in truth, like the tender mercies of the wicked, only cruelty in disguise.

And to correct this, let us glance at an incident in the life of Him whom no one will suspect of the want of affection the most profound, for "He loved us, and gave himself for us."—The hour of the power of darkness was drawing on. His enemies were gradually narrowing the circle around him, and preparing to spring on him at last, as the victim of their hatred unto death. He had intimated to those around him what was about to happen; and Peter, ever resolute, impulsive, and loving, could ill brook the tidings. "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee," were the apostle's ardent and affectionate words; and how did the Saviour regard them? Did he welcome them as a solace to his troubles? Nay, his instant rejoinder was, "Get thee behind me, Satan." In other words, all-affectionate as the apostle's remonstrance seems to our minds, it was opposed to the mind and will of God, and whatever bore that character, was offensive to the Redeemer's holy soul—offensive as Satan himself. Without regarding Peter's love, then—without treating that as love at all which opposed the appointments of Jehovah, Jesus addressed the apostle just as he had once before addressed the tempter himself. "Get thee hence, Satan," were his words when asked to fall down and worship Satan; "Get thee behind me, Satan," was his equally emphatic language to his own apostle, when he pointed to a path which was different from "the way of the Lord."

And that is written for our instruction. Human

affection is only an angel of darkness in the garb of an angel of light, when it would counsel us to walk in any path but God's. Parents may indulge their natural affection at the expense of His holy law. They may concede what He has forbidden, or withhold what He appoints, but that was never yet done without danger of the second death; and parents not a few have helped to bring their own gray hairs in sorrow to the grave, by such concessions to their offspring. The father or the mother who represses the young soul, and lays burdens upon it which the Word of God does not warrant, ranks among the worst of tyrants or oppressors. The father or the mother who yields where God's Word opposes, or cheers the young in ways which our Father who is in heaven has forbidden, is cruel to their soul.

But we are not left merely to infer the results of a blindfold affection on the part of parents; these results have been made the subject of an affecting revelation; and to show how much depends upon the right discharge of parental duty, we have line upon line and precept upon precept. The case of Eli, for example, a man who was at once a priest and a ruler in Israel, is recorded for our warning. His sons did wickedly, and he restrained them not. From indolence of nature, or that phase of affection which leads to connivance at sin or pampering the inborn evil of the heart, Eli did not repress iniquity; he suffered it to grow, even in the house of God, without any effectual restraint; and

what was the result? It ranks among the most terrific of all that is contained in the Word of God. "Behold I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of the hearer shall tingle"—"When I begin I will also make an end, for I have told Eli that I will judge his house for ever, for the iniquity which he knoweth, because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." Here is both the sin and the result. The *sin*—parental neglect, from blindfold affection, or whatsoever cause. The *result*—an amount of iniquity which was not to be forgiven for ever. Parent and child were to suffer, and neither sacrifice nor offering was found for that transgression "for ever." Eli *was* a believer, though compassed about with infirmities; but there is only one other case in all the Word of God where we learn so plainly the eternal portion of any individual soul, as we are told the doom of the godless sons of Eli.

In contrast, then, with the conduct of Abraham, that of Eli brings to parents a lesson as distinct as if it were spoken in thunder, or written in light on the face of the heavens. "The way of the Lord" was the path chosen by the one. He walked there, and led his children with him; and like the palm-tree in its fertility, that man was blessed and made a blessing. But evil without effectual restraint was what Eli tolerated. "The way of the Lord" was forsaken partially by himself, and wholly by his sons; and woe, beyond what tongue can tell, was therefore Eli's lot while he sojourned here below.

Again, in the very constitution of our being the Almighty Maker of heaven and earth has inserted a provision for securing parental ascendancy and aiding parental duty. Without dwelling at present or at large on the power of parental affection, responded to by filial love, let us call to mind the fact that the Saviour made a little child his *model disciple*: “He called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst” of his attendants, and made that child the text of one of his marvellous discourses. Now, consider how it is with the minds of children, that parents may be encouraged amid what is often irksome, namely, making our homes so many nurseries for heaven.

A little child, then, was the Saviour’s model disciple; and what are the characteristics of childhood? It is ready to associate with any who are friendly to it. Regardless of external distinctions, it will condescend to men even of the lowest estate.—And is it not thus that they who are born of God should at all times act? Instead of overbearing arrogance, or selfish endeavours to outstrip or supplant, does not the truth as it is in Jesus teach us to do as a little child instinctively does, to condescend to men of low estate? Are we not taught to esteem others better than ourselves, to love as brethren, to be pitiful and courteous?

Farther, we commonly find a little child transparently guileless. Infancy is proverbially artless; it is reserved for advancing years to develope deceit, or mature the power to be false.—And is it not ever so

with those who are taught of God? They should be pre-eminently men in whom there is no guile, whose word is truth, and whose ways are uprightness. Who has not seen the flushed cheek, the quivering lip, and the downcast eye of youth, when first beginning to deceive? A similar confusion would be produced in the conscience of him who is born from above, were he to yield himself up to the guidance of lies. The little child is here again a model.

Or farther: Mark how devoid of care the infantine are. They repose without forethought or fear upon those whom they love—literally and absolutely, they take no thought for to-morrow. Borne up by the arms of affection, and neither doing nor dreading evil, they are kept in perfect tranquillity: every want is attended to, nay, every want is anticipated. A wisdom beyond what the young can fancy, and a love beyond what they can fathom, are engaged on their behalf, and resting upon these, the helpless and the feeble are safe amid a thousand dangers.

Now, is not that a model to be copied by all who know God's name, and put their trust in Him? Are we not told that only the Gentiles are anxious and fretful? Is it not announced as a general maxim, to which there can be no exceptive case, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof?" And is not one of the most exquisite proofs of a particular providence that ever gladdened the heart of man, furnished by the Saviour with the flowers of the field and the birds

of the air for his text, just meant to produce a child-like confidence in our heavenly Father?*

And once again: Are not children proverbial for their dependence on a parent's word? Do they not place the most unquestioning confidence in the information of those whom they love? Unless the parent be detected as a deceiver, or unless the child be perverted by the vicious example of those who should train it in the truth, not a doubt is felt regarding the word of those with whom infancy associates. And is not that a perfect model of the trust we should repose in the word of our Father who is in heaven? Are we not both reproved and instructed by such little children, as to implicitly confiding in the promises of the unchanging One?†

Now, these things may well encourage parents in the training of the young. There is already a groundwork prepared. They have materials upon which to operate; and though all is vain without the teaching of the Spirit of God, yet with that and the use of means, the hope may be cherished that a race will be trained to serve the Lord when their fathers are no more.

Nor is history devoid of examples tending to enforce the duty of godly training. Of all the names which embellish the history of our island, that of Alfred the Great stands among the foremost. Equally remarkable for his genius, his wisdom, his

* Matt. vi. 25-33.

† See the Domestic Constitution, by Christopher Anderson.

godliness, and his trials, we might find in his single case enough to encourage parental painstaking or rebuke parental neglect. Hear how this monarch speaks: "To thee, O God, I call and speak. Hear, O hear me, Lord! for thou art my God and my Lord, my Father and my Creator, my ruler and my hope, my wealth and my honour, my house, my country, my salvation, and my life! Hear, hear me, O Lord! Few of thy servants comprehend thee. But thee alone I love indeed, above all other things: Thee I seek: Thee I will follow: Thee I am ready to serve. Under thy power I desire to abide, for thou alone art the Sovereign of all. I pray thee to command me as thou wilt."

Now, by what process was this youth enabled to make such acquirements in godliness as that prayer betokens? It was by a device of his mother, who allured him into paths where he learned that truth which he has so beautifully embodied. Her wise and loving heart struck upon a plan which proved the turning-point in Alfred's history. It gave or it confirmed that bent of his mind which made him what he was—which led to the enacting of some of the laws which still signalize England among the nations, as well as prompted this memorable address to his son and successor Edward, on Alfred's dying bed: "We must now part," the sinking monarch said; "I go to another world, and thou shalt be left alone in all my wealth. I pray thee (for thou art my dear child) strive to be a father

and a lord to thy people. Be thou the children's father and the widow's friend. Comfort thou the poor, and shelter the weak; and with all thy might, right what is wrong. And, son, govern thyself by law. Then shall the Lord love thee, and God, above all things, shall be thy reward. Call thou upon him to advise thee in all thy need, and so shall he help thee the better to compass what thou wouldest." Now that, we repeat, and similar examples may well stimulate parental diligence and animate parental hope. In a barbarous age, amid rude and martial men, with superstition seeking to efface all that was divine, and ignorance combining its power to help superstition to accomplish that object, Alfred rose above every obstacle, and stamped impressions upon his country which all time cannot efface.—What can Christian principle in the hands of a godly mother not achieve? What forms may not be impressed upon the molten lead?

On this subject, however, there is a difficulty which sometimes meets us, at which it may be instructive to glance. On the one hand, we read, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," but on the other, it is too well known that even children who have been trained by godly parents often go astray. They make haste to abandon the narrow path as soon as they dare, and plunge into sin as if they were determined to show how boldly they can trample upon all that is sacred or constraining. How many a parent's heart is at

this moment aching, or how many have gone down in sorrow to the grave, lamenting the iniquity of those whom they had tried to train, or for whom they had watched and prayed ! Ten thousand mothers have had Monica's trials, without living to share her joy, and the homes which should have been like temples of religion, have become the abodes of woe.

Now, how is this apparent contradiction to be explained ? The Scriptures say, " Train up a child in the way that he should go," and add the assurance, " When he is old, he will not depart from it ;" but, in opposition to that, we see some of the children of godly parents plunging into sin ; and how do we explain the seeming contradiction ?

We explain it just by stating the truth. The child who has gone astray never was in the right way : he refused so much as to enter it. His training was a burden and an offence. Fear might compel him to comply with a form for a season. The parent took pains ; he corrected the child, perhaps through tears ; he warned ; he prayed ; but the heart was never won to God. The iniquity which was bound up in the heart of that child resisted every appliance. Sin was still loved. It was turned like a sweet morsel under the tongue. Holiness continued to be disliked. The constraints of a Christian home were like fetters to that child ; and, when his pent-up iniquity broke out at last, it was only the open display of what had always been latently ruling. In a word, he had not been trained, nay, he had resisted

every attempt to train him, in the way in which he ought to go. He might be the inmate of a Christian home; but he never had a Christian heart; the truth of God was repelled; the Spirit of God was quenched; and the explanation is:—"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

On the other hand, however, does some child receive the truth into the heart? Does sin become an offence? Is the Word of God loved? Is the salvation of God sought? Then that child *is* trained in the way in which he ought to go. There may yet come an eclipse of faith. Temptation may for a season prevail, and the world may appear to have regained the mastery. But if the nurture and admonition of the Lord has been welcomed into the heart, as the Spirit imparts his blessing, the effect produced will never fade utterly away. Out of the mouth of such a one God will perfect praise; and while some companion beside him is growing up in wickedness, or casting the Word of God behind his back—searing the conscience, hardening the heart, and ruining the soul—the other is growing up to the stature of a perfect man in Christ. Like a tree planted by the rivers of water, he bears his fruit in his season, and all he does shall prosper.

But further, the subject of parental training suggests a question which occasions not a little per-

plexity to some Christian minds. We refer to the line which separates the unquestionably worldly from the decidedly Christian, in the training of the young. There are practices on which every Christian parent must frown, and from which he must recoil, if he would not promote the ruin, by fostering the worldly-mindedness, of his children; but there are intermediate practices, regarding which he may find it more difficult to decide, and upon this point we quote the authority of one whose weighty words all who would not conspire with the world against their own children, should very gravely ponder. Dr. Chalmers says: "In the face of every hazard to the worldly interests of his offspring, will a Christian parent bring them up in the strict nurture and admonition of the Lord; and he will loudly protest against iniquity, in all its degrees and in all its modifications; and while the power of discipline remains with him, will it ever be exerted on the side of pure, faultless, undeviating obedience; and he will tolerate no exception whatever; and he will brave all that looks formidable in singularity, and all that looks menacing in separation from the custom and countenance of the world; and feeling that his main concern is to secure for himself and for his family a place in the city which hath foundations, will he spurn all the maxims and all the plausibilities of a contagious neighbourhood away from him."*

* Discourses on the application of Christianity to the Commercial and Ordinary affairs of life.—Discourse VI.

But it is more than time that we should proceed to refer to the duties of Children. Had it been our object to submit detailed directions for a Christian home, we must have spoken at length of the cardinal duty of family worship, without which, it should never be disguised for a moment, our homes cannot be Christian. The household in which God is not worshipped is like a ship at sea without a pilot or a helm, while the tempest is rising and threatening to rage. However majestic the vessel or costly the cargo, she is at the mercy of the first rock—it may be, the very first wave. “Him that honoureth God, God will honour; but he that despiseth God shall be lightly esteemed;” and the neglect of this honour is, beyond all controversy, one cause of the degeneracy which is now so apparent in many spheres.

Or we must have told that parents, and very specially that mothers, should deal with their children from time to time, as only Christian mothers can do, regarding the state of the soul, according to the measure of the young capacity. To stimulate them to that duty, we might quote or enforce the words of a man much honoured of God: “Ah, could you see your children standing at the bar of Christ, unconverted, through an affectionate mother’s neglect of their souls, how would the scene rend your hearts with anguish!”*

* See a remarkable little volume, “Memoirs of Harlan Page.”

Or we must have dwelt on the fact that no parent is at liberty to devolve the Christian training of his child upon another. It is the primary law of God over all, that the parent should see to the child's religious training; and the home in which that is neglected, is one where a large portion of the law of God is ignored. Sabbath-schools have been blessed beyond what can be told, to remedy existing evils—to roll back, or at least repress, the rising tide of iniquity; and multitudes will rejoice for ever over such institutions. In the state of degradation into which multitudes have sunk, they have long been our only hope—but they belong to a diseased state of society. They are for those who would otherwise be neglected or outcast, and can never supersede the obligation imposed upon all parents, without exception, to bring up their children in the nurture of the Lord.

Or, in providing for the Christianizing of men's homes, we might have spoken on the subject of correction, and told that, in spite of modern theories to the contrary, that is an ordinance of God—though never to be employed till all else has failed, and to be administered, when administered at all, through tears, as giving more pain to the parent who corrects, than to the child who is corrected.

Or, in adverting to the ascendancy of Christian principle in our homes, we might mention the need of care on the part of parents, lest they commit their children to paths, in regard to this world's business,

where a very miracle of grace is needed to save them from destruction. Who can doubt, that in selecting the school where their offspring shall be trained, or the master whom they shall serve, or the profession which they shall follow, many a parent has sacrificed his child to the god of this world? This is a sore evil; and in an age like ours, when even the souls of men are made a matter of merchandise, a Christian parent will beware lest he expose inexperienced youth amid scenes where everlasting destruction may await the soul.

But these we only name, and now offer one suggestion to the young themselves: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord;" or, "Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing unto the Lord."—These are the Scriptural injunctions, from which there can be no swerving without committing sin. Did parents issue some command contrary to the Word of God, then a Christian child must decline obeying it, for that child is bound by a higher allegiance to God; but in all common cases, the parent is in God's place to the child. The parent's will is law—a law which cannot be broken without guilt. That law, indeed, is to be administered with the sceptre of love, and not with a rod of iron; and while children are to obey their parents, "parents are not to provoke their children to wrath." But still, the unvarying rule is—the parent's will is supreme; and wherever filial affection reigns, that law will be sacredly observed, because it is

founded on the authority of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is guarded on the one hand by the promise of blessings to the obedient, and on the other by such words as these: "He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind." Insubordination here is the root of wrath and woe.

Next to the relation of husband and wife, and parent and child, stands that of master and servant; and here also our homes should be presided over by Christian principle. On the one hand, there is obedience due even to the froward; and on the other, there is care and kindness—kindness to the souls of our domestics, as well as in other respects. In our mercenary and utilitarian age, when human beings are often regarded by hard-minded men, only as so much living machinery, and when the chief question concerning them is too often the same as that which is employed concerning the beasts that perish—How can their flesh and blood be turned to most profitable account?—this relation is often formed or conducted upon principles the reverse of Christian. The employed are too ready to prey upon the employer, while he treats them with lordly indifference or with heartless disregard. They are thus often arrayed against each other, like natural enemies, instead of being united, as mutually dependent.

But a better day has dawned, in which the bonds which unite master and servant are better understood. If servants are to act like those who serve the Lord Christ, and to do their duty heartily as unto

the Lord, masters are to beware lest their dependants be hindered in that service by selfish exaction or inconsiderate unkindness. This relation is not a merely mercenary one—it is degraded when viewed only in that light. It has moral elements mixed up with it now, as in the days of old, when Abraham commanded his household, as well as his children, to "keep the way of the Lord." The soul as well as the body, eternity as well as time, are to be kept in view in this as in every relation; and never was that principle outraged without eventual injury to all. It is much to oppress the hireling, or rob him of his wages; but it is more to defraud the soul of its due. It is much to occasion pain by haughtiness or harshness; but it is more to coerce or to sully the conscience; and the Bible is not the lamp of that home where souls are thus defrauded.

And who can ever compute the guilt of those who tamper with a servant's truthfulness, and train her to falsehood, to screen them from intruders? That form of sin is perhaps now well-nigh banished to the highest ranks, and to those who mimic their example; but we can picture no more certain process for defacing all that is pure and lovely in a soul, than the practice to which we advert. And when such a habit as the utterance of a falsehood, for any purpose, is imposed upon a servant, that servant should resolutely reject it. There may come the storm of the cruel seducer's anger; but better that than the tempest of the Judge's wrath. There may come home-

lessness or poverty ; but better that than a polluted conscience and a shipwrecked faith. Stanch Christian principle never yet inflicted a lasting injury upon any one, and he need not be afraid for what man can do, who has learned humbly, but firmly, to say, "It is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment. . . . He that judgeth me is the Lord."*

Nor let us fail to remark, that it was for the guidance of servants that these memorable words were inspired : "Exhort servants to be obedient to their masters, and to please them well in all things ; not answering again ; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity ;" and mark the lofty motive, "that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." That is surely truest dignity, and again we say, How would domestic life be sweetened ; how would many of our sins be compelled to hide their head ashamed ; how would the lowly be exalted ; how would the general aspect of society be changed—were our homes Christian homes in this respect ! Were masters in their spheres, and servants in theirs, alike setting the Lord before them, alike serving him, alike "walking in the way of the Lord"—that one maxim steadfastly obeyed, would revolutionize many a home for good. No petty invasion then of another's rights on the one hand ; no haughty neglect upon the other ;—all

* 1 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

would be well-ordered, for all would be according to the mind of God.*

And with this all before us, let fathers, mothers, and children—let masters and servants, or the employer and the employed, decide—Are they realizing their responsibility? Are they seeking the eternal good of those with whom they are connected? Are they enduring no wicked thing before their eyes, according to the Word of the Eternal? We know that a parent, for example, cannot impart grace to his child; nay, some of those whom parents most fondly cherish, may turn at last and rend them. But may not the hope be cherished that the blessing of God upon the use of means will turn the hearts of the children to the parents; or better still, to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ? May not parents hope, that in answer to their prayers and their pains, God will guide the young to Him whom these parents fear, to the Saviour whom they love, and the heavenly abode of which a Christian home on earth is the vestibule or type? Let parents pray for that result; let them labour for it; let them hope

* "It may look to some a degradation of the pulpit, when the household servant is told to make her firm stand against the temptation of open doors and secret opportunities; or when the confidential agent is told to resist the slightest inclination to any unseen freedom with the property of his employers. or to any discoverable excess in the charges of his management; or when the receiver of a humble payment is told that the tribute which is due on every written acknowledgment ought faithfully to be met, and not fictitiously to be evaded. This is not robbing religion of its sacredness, but spreading its sacredness over the face of society. It is evangelizing human life by impregnating its minutest transactions with the Spirit of the Gospel."—Dr. CHALMERS.

for it; and the Spirit of God may thus honour them to win the young to Christ. But how terrific the portion of the parent who shall meet his child in the presence of God, when that child has perished through the parent's sin! How blessed, how double the heaven, which is the home at once of parent and of child!

Would men then be happy? Let the love of Christ reign in their homes. Let them yield to that heavenly power which alone can quell tumultuous passion, or charm away the unhallowed effects of sin from scenes which should ever be sacred to holiness and peace. That love *should* well up in the Christian soul like a stream in the desert, refreshing all, and turning sterility into greenness. Now, is that the case? Has the truth been lodged in the heart? Is the mind of God, the law of the Lord, our guide? Then the cheerfulness of heavenly peace will glance through our abodes. They may be only a straw-built shed, or they may be the halls of the princely; but wherever the love of Jesus reigns, there is peace with God, joy in God, and preparation to be for ever with Him.

CHAPTER III.

RELIGION IN THE WORKSHOP.

THERE is no error in religion more common or more deadly, than to put the means for the end. So rarely does man regard aright the great object of the soul's pursuit, that he is ready to repose supinely upon something done, without ever solemnly inquiring whether he has reached the right result by doing it, or only been deceived by a semblance and a form.—We read the Word of God, and think that it can accomplish what only He of whom it tells can achieve. We hold certain doctrines, and because we hold them firmly, we hasten to the conclusion that we actually possess the blessings which these doctrines reveal or imply. Or finally, the intellect of some is filled with truth in its loftiest forms; but there it lies, exercising no influence upon the life. It quiets the conscience, but it does not sanctify the soul; and the anomaly of a spiritual creed side by side with a carnal life is thus frequently found among men—the worst of all heresies, the most deadly of all deceptions, a repetition of Chorazin and Bethsaida.

Now, it can never be made too plain that revelation, with all that is glorious in it, is only a means to an end. Even the death of Christ, solitary as it stands in its moral grandeur, among the events of the universe, was only a means—the end was *God's*

glory in man's holiness. To bring a clean thing out of an unclean; to transmute enmity against God into love to him, or wounds and bruises and noisome sores into the beauty of holiness—behold the grand result aimed at alike in the life and the death of the Son of God. By dying he did accomplish other results, and the influence of that death is felt to the utmost verge of creation, as we know it is felt among the angels on high. But still it is the *grand result* we should ever aim at, and that is, deliverance from sin in its condemnation, its pollution, and its power: “This is the will of God, even our holiness.”

Now, this simple truth may serve as a guide or an ally in every sphere of life, but specially so in that sphere which we are now to contemplate, or the Bible in the Workshop. And an incident recorded in the Christian Scriptures will at once shed light upon the subject. On more than one occasion the apostle Paul had to work with his hands to earn his daily bread.* Though the care of all the churches was upon him; though the enmity of the prejudiced, and the persecution of those who had the power, tried to bear him down, he was yet amid it all, a man of handicraft and hard labour—he could sit down with Aquila in his workshop, and there engage in manual labour for his livelihood, with all the zeal of his noble and indomitable nature. He at least was not

* Acts xviii. 3; xx. 34. 1 Cor. iv. 12. 1 Thess. ii. 9.

one of those who think that idleness and indolence can dignify man's position. He was not one of those who would deem themselves degraded by being useful. He knew that man is born under a decree to work. He therefore wrought; and just as this man of God, when it was his duty, put forth all the powers of his intellect and soul in reasoning before Festus, or Felix, or King Agrippa, did he put forth the powers of his body in making tents in the workshop of his friend at Corinth. Enough for Paul, if he was where the Lord wished him to be, or engaged in what the Lord gave him to do; and without one feeling either of degradation or of discontent, he bore the toils of the body as well as exerted the activities of the mind; he both taught and practised the lesson, "If any man will not work, neither shall he eat." He felt that every man must be a worker, either with mind, or body, or both. The last was his alternative; and we know that in some cases the night was added to the day, ere he could complete his allotted task. Sinew, and muscle, and bone, in Paul's case, were dedicated to the service of God, as well as a mental power which could not be gainsaid, except by the bigot's ever ready argument—the dungeon, the chain, or death.

With this high model in view, then, let us now enter a workshop, and accost some of those who are there. Our object is to show how the Bible should preside among them, to protect the character from pollution—the soul from peril. Remembering that

Christian worth does not depend on lofty birth or brilliant powers, but on a heart right with God, and his long-lost image restored to the soul, consider how that image may become more and more vivid, if it be indeed stamped on us by the Spirit.

And, first, not a few of those with whom we associate in the workshop, are snares to the soul of the very direst kind. We find that infidelity which is often the result of utter ignorance, there rampant and rife. We often see vice rioting in the life, and shutting the heart against the truth. A soul in which religion is felt and loved, will hear what it deems sacred blasphemed, and in self-defence, it may be constrained to contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Some of those who are thus tried can tell of the mental anguish to which they are exposed—of the snares which are laid for them on the right hand and on the left—the heroism which is needed to contend, perhaps single-handed, against a crowd of gainsayers, who know of no pleasure but the pleasures of sin, or care for no truth but such as relates to gross and material things. As the body is oppressed and dies amid mephitic vapours, the soul grows sick and like to die amid scenes like these. It has to maintain a constant struggle for existence, as the natives of some portions of India maintain a constant warfare with the inhabitants of the jungle—the boa, the lion, or the tiger. Men long neglected by those who should have consulted for their better interests; men long viewed

as only so much animal machinery, to be used as long as it can drudge, and then heartlessly cast aside; men long treated as if they had neither souls to save, nor an eternity to provide for, have too often sunk so far that they threaten to take revenge upon society, by trampling out every vestige of truth that can be found in the places of their exhaustion and toil.

Now, amid perils like these, surely the man who cares for his soul has just the more need to cleave close to the only power which can give him the victory—and that power is Christ. Every ungodly gainsayer should be to that man an object of pity, like that of the Redeemer to our fallen world. Every blasphemer, every infidel, every man who has given himself up to the slavery of passion, and dethroned at once his reason and his God, should be an object of tender compassion to the soul of the Christian beside him. While sporting with their own ruin, such men should be like another, and another, and another call to all who know the truth, to show by their life at least, what a Christian, or what Christianity is—how true it is that

“ We can make our lives sublime,
And departing, leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;”

and the following counsels may help some earnest spirit in that arduous work.

The most godly occupant of a workshop will be the least surprised to hear us say, Next to the Bible,

prize the Sabbath-day, and let no man rob you of its sacred rest. You will thus find it a tower of strength to the soul.

While we look around us, we everywhere see the blessed results of the Sabbath rest when properly employed, the woeful consequences of its sacred hours encroached on, whether by the drudgery of toil or the debasement of licentiousness. See that home where domestic comfort dwells, where well-ordered decorum reigns, and where the parent and the child have alike their part assigned to them from day to day. Be sure that the Sabbath is there observed; the very peace which prevails around you in that abode, is a portion of the Sabbath itself spread over the week.*

But see that other home where squalid wretchedness, perhaps unholy riot, reigns. See children neglected, see character lost, see poverty bringing woe in its train—a woe which is gradually rising like an engulfing tide upon the inmates, till at last they are steeped to the lip in misery. See a wife worse than widowed amid the brutalities of that home; or, more degrading still, see her uniting with her guilty partner in godless revelry, till, like the meeting of fires, the two together waste and consume every vestige of

* "He lives in a cottage, and yet he is a king and a priest unto God. He is fixed for life to the ignoble drudgery of a workman, and yet he is on the full march to a blissful immortality. He is a child in the mysteries of science, but familiar with greater mysteries. That preaching of the cross which is foolishness to others, he feels to be the power of God and the wisdom of God."—DR. CHALMERS.

what is pure, and lovely, and of good report. Now, while you gaze upon that scene, be sure that the sacred hours of the Sabbath are dishallowed there; they are squandered in licentiousness, and perverted into the means of ruin. In brief, the Sabbath is there trodden under foot. The ungodliness of the week grows deeper and darker on the Lord's own day, because the abuse of the best things turns them into the worst; and accumulated crime, like a swollen river, sweeps the inmates at last, some to prison, some to an hospital, some to exile, some to death.

And these, and a thousand similar cases, warn us in the workshop to prize the day of rest. It frees the sons and daughters of toil for a little from the burdens of earth. It braces their mind for the struggle with sin throughout the week. It enables them to clothe themselves with the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left. It affords an opportunity for anchoring the soul to the Rock of Ages. If employed as it ought to be, that day, which is not ours, but the Lord's, who claims a seventh portion of our time as peculiarly his own, will arm the mind for meekly but resolutely putting away at once the wiles and the assaults of the godless. "I know in whom I have believed," may be the reply of the godly artizan to all the gainsayers; and he may thus proceed upon his way as a believer, as unmoved either by the scorn or the assault of the infidel or the licentious, as Galileo was unshaken amid all the persecutions of popery, when he told the

world the true theory of the skies. In a word, with the Bible open before us, and the mind of God for our standard there, he is at once the strongest and the happiest Christian who has best learned to practise what John taught by his example, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

Now, we put that counsel first, because unless it be religiously acted on, all else will be vain. At the same time, we are now in circumstances for putting this matter to a practical proof upon a large scale. In various cities of the empire, there are churches formed well-nigh exclusively of those who, a few years ago, had no man who cared for their souls, and who had not learned to care for themselves. They were therefore, familiar with sin. It was their sport, or rather their daily work, to do mischief. Some of them were at once corrupt and corrupting. But out of these very souls there have been formed the goodly spectacle of earnest worshippers, counted by hundreds, and characterized by all the aspects of devoutness.

And, what is it that has achieved these results? How does it happen that instead of the thorn the fir-tree has come up; instead of the brier, the myrtle? and how does the desert blossom as the rose? Who will hesitate to reply, that had it not been for the Sabbath, with all that is blessed and all that is hallowing in its exercises, such effects could never have been produced? From day to day, nay, from hour to hour, pains and prayer were

needed. From hour to hour, the men of faith who put their hands to that work, had to depend on the blessing which comes from God only. But these blessings came in rich abundance on the Lord's own day; and now it can be said of this man and that man, formerly an outcast from the decencies of life, that he is born of the Spirit, clothed and in his right mind, by the Spirit's blessing on his truth proclaimed. In the light of eternity, such men are ennobled.

Now, what raised them from their degradation, is yet more able to keep us from falling; and sure we are, that were there but one man in a workshop who knew how to prize and profit by the Lord's day, he could, single-handed, keep his ground at once against taunts, against malice, and against all persecution. On that day our God leads us, if we will let him, into his pavilion; He teaches us where to hide from "the strife of tongues," and it is thus that true nobility is imparted even to him

"Who ploughs with pain his native lea,
And reaps the labour of his hands."

II. Where it is our daily business to earn our bread by the sweat of our brows in the workshop, it should be one of our first and most resolute endeavours, to make sure that the truth which Jesus brought from heaven to earth is deeply planted in our hearts and souls.—There are tender plants which thrive and bloom, or bear luxuriant fruit, if sheltered well, but which wither and die if exposed to the biting blast for a night; and there is a parallel to

that in religion. In kindly or in genial exposures it may thrive, and put forth its blossoms or bear fruit; but in many a workshop it is exposed to the rudest blasts that blow.

One would try to crush it; he hates it because it will not let him sin. Like that profligate man who wished Keith's Evidences from Prophecy destroyed, "because they were so convincing;" many cry, Away with the Word of God, for the same reason that the Jews cried, Away, away with the Son of God—because it rebukes their iniquity.

And another wishes the Word of God put down, because he remembers its effects upon his soul in earlier years, when a godly parent tried to impress it on the conscience and the heart. He has now cast these instructions behind his back. He has learned to sin with a high hand; and as the sight or the sounds of the truth re-awaken his old concern, he is eager to drive it from his presence. The very sight is a sting to his conscience. A single clause may be like a death-knell, and that man hates it with a perfect hatred. That is the root of much of the infidelity which is now so rife—not the want of proof, but the evil heart of unbelief; not mere ignorance, but the preference of sin to holiness.

Or a third among our fellow-workmen may be one who has known some signal hypocrite. That pretender sought, perhaps, to promote some sinister object by a religious profession. Perhaps he prayed; perhaps he was a reprover of other men's sins; perhaps

he was an eager advocate for sound doctrine, and would endure no departure from it—yet, after all, he may be unmasked as a mere pretender. It may be discovered at length that he was all the while living in sin, concealed, but long continued, such as to indicate that his religion was a pretence, and his strictness that of a Pharisee. Now, having discovered the hollowness of that man's pretensions, some gladly rush to the conclusion that all religion is a pretence; they greedily grasp at the conviction, because it favours their own licentiousness, that "there is none righteous, no, not one." Religion in every form is therefore regarded as an offence, or discarded as an imposture.

Or, in the workshop beside us, we may find some other man who affects to be scientific. He knows a little of Geology, and is able to overthrow Moses and the Bible. He is acquainted with the secrets of Chronology, and thinks that there are far older histories—older by many thousands of years—than the records of Scripture pretend to be. Or that man has heard a little of Ethnography, and because he is ignorant, he thinks it can be proved that all the dwellers on the earth did not spring from Adam and Eve. Or perhaps his learning takes the direction of tracing the Vestiges of Creation, and he concludes that man can create—generally, that creatures can make each other, and that God is therefore unnecessary. These, and similar pretensions of science, falsely so called, may have taken hold of

some minds around us, and amid the multitude of such assailants, who are bold, as streams are brawling, in proportion to their shallowness, it may not be always easy to be steadfast and unmoveable.

But to render us unmoveable—to arm us against such assailants—nothing will suffice, till Christ dwell in our hearts by faith; till his truth be *our property*; till the Saviour be a Saviour, and pardon a pardon, *to us*. A religion which has merely been handed down to us by our fathers, will not stand the rude shock of such assaults as have been named. We need to be rooted and grounded in the truth. We require a better and a deeper teaching than man's. It must be a fixed conviction in our soul, that religion does not consist in observing mere forms or seasons, however devoutly. Christ must dwell in the heart, just as the blood must be in the body, and circulate there as a vitalizing power.

On this subject we cannot be too urgent. While there is absolutely no panoply but truth, our convictions need to be reinforced by the feeling, that it is not toil that degrades man; it is not hard labour that ranks him among the lower orders; it is sin. Adam, in innocence, had to work, and that did not degrade him. But he sinned, and that laid him in the miry clay. Paul the apostle had to work, and felt no dishonour in it. The only dishonour which he knew, was rebellion against God; and if we would resist the temptations which assail us from without or from within, we need to make sure that we are on the Lord's side; that his

truth is in our hearts ; that it keeps watch in our souls, ready to sound an alarm, and summon us to action against every enemy. Without that, surrounded as we are in the workshop with clouds of enemies, we shall be like the willow wand before the blast, and driven of the wind and tossed ; but with the grace of God in the soul, we may be strong in the Lord and the power of his might ; we may beat back our assailants—some have won them to their cause. No power but truth, we repeat, will ever make us steadfast. Some invest our “cottage homes” with the attractions of poetry, and tell that

“ Fearless there the lowly sleep,
As the bird beneath their eaves.”

But it is not poetic embellishments—it is nothing factitious in man’s lot—it is the simple truth of God uniting to Christ, that elevates or ennobles the soul.

There are some dark-souled tribes in Africa, whose whole religion consists in charms and incantations. By means which we need not tarry to describe, they try to ward off what they reckon evil, or to obtain what they reckon good. Now, strange as it may appear, that folly is native to the mind of man. The very same tendency which makes a degraded savage trust to a charm, makes some who are not savages trust to rites, and ceremonies, and forms. One man concludes that he and his children are born again, or made the children of God, by the mere fact that they were baptized—that is, by a ceremony. Another thinks that his soul is right, because he

worships among Christians. A third concludes that all is well, because the sacrament of the Supper has been administered to him; that rite is to many a soul what the extreme unction of popery is—a charm, an incantation, and nothing more. Now, while that is the only form of religion in man's soul, he will prove the ready victim of the snares and entanglements of the workshop. If the truth of God be not rooted in the heart, no man can stand. We repeat it, and repeat it—there is only one power that can either make us steadfast or keep us so—the grace of God in truth; and the man who confides in aught else for conquest, is already tottering to his fall.

Observe, however, we disown no right ally in this holy warfare. All knowledge that deserves the name—science as far as it can be acquired—should be acquired by every occupant of the workshop, and some memorable examples of success in its culture could be named. These, and all that can either strengthen or expand the mind, should be cultivated to the uttermost of our power; but with all these, the mind may become an easy prey to baseless delusions, unless the wisdom which comes from above be our guide. While we hold our convictions firmly, we must hold them as God's truth, and in God's strength, or they will soon be wrung from our grasp. To be self-reliant is in some respects a duty which we owe to ourselves; but yet to trust to our own resources, our own wisdom or strength, is the high way to shame and confusion at the last. We are prepared to resist and to triumph only when

we have on the whole armour of God. If we try to realize a Saviour's love, we have a sure defence; but whatever would withdraw us from that holy influence, whether it be the deceitful heart within, or an ensnaring world without, is just like the smoke from the abyss—it is loaded with darkness and death to the soul.

There is a canoe floating lazily on the waters of the St. Lawrence. All is bright on either side; and forests which nothing but the wild beast or the tempest has disturbed for centuries, wave in the plenitude of summer richness. In that canoe there is a boatman asleep, and the gentle gliding of his little craft is fitted rather to rock than to rouse him. Gradually, however, the river flows more rapidly. The boat, with its sleeping cargo, feels the suction, and now rushes with increasing velocity along. Its agitation at length rouses the sleeper, but it is too late. His skiff feels the resistless power of the current; and, amid wild gesticulations, he plunges into an abyss where his very fragments are destroyed. And similar results are seen in the moral world, when men permit themselves to be drawn within the suction of that current which is sweeping so many down to ruin for ever.

Were it needful further to enforce this subject, we might refer to the ever-varying forms of delusion which heady and selfish men often obtrude on the notice of their fellow-workmen. Even in the course of a single generation we may count scheme after scheme—Utopian reforms—charters—new distributions of pro-

perty or power—all designed to enlist men's sympathies in favour of some dream-like project, only to plunge its abettors into a deeper abyss than before. The most recent of these assumes the name of *Secularism*. It has for its object the abolition of Christianity, and all that relates to the soul. One of its leading maxims is, "The precedence of the duties of this life over those pertaining to another world;" and, by the advocacy of such opinions, the system and its supporters adapt themselves to all that is low and grovelling in the fallen soul. They beguile the unwary, and make an easy conquest of those who have no religion but that of their country or their fathers. Or another dogma of the system is, that "the atonement of Christ is unsatisfactory as a scheme, and immoral as an example;" and by such tenets men would tear up the foundation on which the hopes of mortality repose: they proudly but blindly sport with their own ruin, and glory in lowering themselves to the level of the beasts which perish.

Now, against such satanic schemes, there is no safeguard but one—the truth as it is in Jesus, planted in the heart by his Spirit, and tended there by his grace. Our religion, or what we call religion, will perish like flax before the flame, when such deceivers assail, unless we have felt the truth in its power, and know, in spite of all opposition, that it *can* guide, *can* purify, *can* bless the soul. What more congenial to man than to be told that he need not care much about his soul? What can

throw open the door for indulgence so widely as to be assured that we need not prepare for hereafter—that earth is all? What can more perfectly pamper the selfishness of man than to be told that “spiritual dependence may lead to material destruction?” Hence the danger of such bold blasphemies. They find an ally, and often a ready welcome, in the heart of man; and hence also the necessity of getting hold and keeping hold of the heavenly antidote to all such delusions. That antidote is the truth—the truth of God felt in the heart, and guiding the life; and with that in our possession, we repeat *in our possession*, we may humbly take up the great Reformer’s eulogy, and say, “I will not fear the face of man.” God and man, this world and the next, are alike provided for in the Word; and when we learn to welcome all God’s revelation, we shall be guided into every good and holy way.

III. A third counsel for our guidance in the workshop is, briefly—Be consistent. Never forget that the man who tries to be a Christian to-day, and complies with the enticements of sinners to-morrow, is one who is easily despised. The ungodly are lynx-eyed to mark his inconsistency, and prompt enough to pour contempt upon him. A single rash act, a single rash word, may inflict a wound upon the soul, or a blemish upon the character, from which it will not easily recover; nay, like a moral palsy, it may strike us with weakness and timidity for life. If we would

be Christians at all, we must be Christians always. Then by the grace of God we are safe, and it would be pleasant to tell of some who have thus resisted the tide of iniquity which broke against them in the workshop, or silenced the abundance of abuse.—The sinner is, by a necessary law, a coward. He fears God, though he will not own it; he fears conscience, and tries to trample it out as a dangerous spark; he fears perdition, though he seems to be stout against it; and, moreover, he fears a humble, living, consistent Christian, though he pretends only to despise him. The sinner, we repeat, is a coward, by a necessary law. Terror is part of the wages of sin; and though sinners in crowds be courageous, *alone* they are timid and discomposed. They shrink from the glance of a good man's eye; in their secret heart they fear him with a fear which in some cases passes into love.

Now, the knowledge of that should make the believer bold and firm. By consistency he will subdue—he may be the means of winning some from the error of their ways. He will generally find some Aquila with whom to associate as he works. His God will raise up some like-minded companion with whom he can take sweet counsel; and if that believer will seek to keep alive in his memory, in the workshop and everywhere, the conviction, that there is only one really formidable thing in all God's world, *that is sin*, he will be made more than a conqueror. Swayed by that deep conviction, the occupant of the workshop may often be vexed, as Lot

was in Sodom; but, appealing to the Wonderful, the Counsellor, strength will be supplied according to his day, while conscience is kept unsullied and at peace. The squalid victim of sin will be a beacon. The bold blasphemer will be an object of utmost pity. The Secularist, and all who give earth precedence to heaven, or man to God, or sin to holiness, will be shunned as a moral pestilence; and the felt necessity of being much at the fountain, amid all these sources of contamination, may turn the workshop into a Bethel. We could tell of more than one instance in which that has been the case.

IV. As it is not our object to enter into details, but mainly to submit such general suggestions as Christian wisdom may enable men to apply as occasion requires, we need scarcely say—At once, and resolutely, put away all the sinful compliances which may be common in the business which you pursue. There are usages, there are expressions, there are pretexts in many departments which pure principle would at once put down, and let the workman of integrity disown such things. The commonness of a sin only makes it worse; and instead of pleading that as a reason for compliance, it is, in truth, a reason for our instant recoil. And never take up the words which are common on the lips of some, that they may cover their iniquity, although the veil be thin: “An honest man cannot live now—that is, we must employ finesse, or fraud, in order to obtain a livelihood, or

clear our way through the world." Such a statement is a slander against the truth; it is dishonouring to the God of truth, and the very reverse of it is true. But write it deep upon the conscience, that "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and strife," and be assured that godliness has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. Be poor, but be not unprincipled. Sit down to very humble fare, rather than harbour an angry conscience. When sinners entice you, do not consent, whatever be the bribe. Holding fast your integrity, in the strength of your God, he will redeem his promise, "Bread shall be provided, and water made sure," and "Better is the little that a good man hath, than the riches of many wicked."

Would you struggle for your life were you suddenly to fall into a stream or the sea? You would: then will you calmly sink to rise no more for ever, as regards the soul? Would you repel the attack of a robber were he to invade the midnight silence of your home? You would: then with equal earnestness, but in almighty strength, repel the invader—the man that would be the assassin of your soul. Would you refuse to let the oppressor plant his foot on the happy island of your home? You would hasten, I believe, to sweep him from our borders. Then, with equal heroism, defend the freedom which the Son of God bestows—freedom from the bondage of sin, from its pollution and its curse.

Nor should it be forgotten for the encouragement

of the sons of toil, that there is in our day a gradual approximation of the classes of society. The spreading of education, and the attempts of one class to benefit another, are bringing men more closely together, to link them, as we have seen, in more brotherly concord. There may still be the scowl of defiance from the lawless, and plots on the part of the disaffected, while on the other hand, there are still some remains of a class fast verging to extinction, who would doom the people to hopeless ignorance and toil. But these are nearly obsolete notions, and men are more cordially walking together now, like those who are agreed. In the brief space of a quarter of a century, the hopes of philanthropists once deemed Utopian, have been turned into realities; and while the doctrine of Christ is thus adorned, men's sorrows are soothed, their souls are blessed.

Many other counsels might be added to those now advanced. We might say—In the workshop avoid all high debate. It never leads to edification; it often occasions the loss both of our temper and our cause. “Be always ready to give to every one that asks it, a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.” Be as ready to protest against all that is hostile to the soul and the happiness of man. But contention about religion is often its death; and we would rather say, Hold in your mouth as with a bridle when the wicked are before you. Let *the life* argue for the Saviour and his cause, far more than the lip. In that way, men will be compelled to take

knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus. The life of a Christian is always the most conclusive argument and the most solemn appeal. "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands," and let the contentious bite and devour, without retaliation from you.

We might farther say—Be diligent. Above all, be diligent for Christ. It is thus that his people learn to put on armour of proof against all temptation. They redeem the time. They try to do all in the name of Christ, and he becomes like walls and bulwarks round about them. If you will learn to be a "miser of moments," you may grow rich for eternity.

Or we might say—When temptations come, remember that ere the first tempter succeeded, he had to become a reptile; and he that would tempt you is by that act a degraded being. He is to be shunned as an offence; as debased himself, and therefore anxious to debase. Such men may sell their souls for woe, but surely "in vain is the snare set in the sight of any bird—" will you follow the example of a self-destroyer?

Or we might add—Be not deceived by any of the pretexts which cunning men adopt to beguile and ensnare. On the one hand, they flatter *the working* classes, as if all were idle except the inmates of the workshop; but you know that it is not so. What Paul said to the Colossians concerning his own doings, is true of many still: "I toil, agonizing," he said, "with the energy of Christ." On the other hand,

men speak of the lower orders as if *you who toil* were they. But the really low are the men who live in idleness and sin. It is not toil, it is guilt that lowers or degrades us ; and that conviction should be rooted in all our minds.

But enough. Let the men of handicraft and hard labour cling close to the Bible, for it alone can enoble and purify. Before its light, let all grow pale ; before its wisdom, let all appear foolish.—As we approach the mighty Alps, other objects begin to seem small or diminutive ; and after our eyes have been familiarized with those majestic masses, what formerly appeared grand seems now reduced to littleness.—Let it be so in the moral world. Before the majestic truth of God, let every human being do obeisance, like the sheaves of his brothers to the sheaf of Joseph ; and when we are like-minded with our God, we shall be strong in his strength, and happy with his peace. We cannot be always in his house—our daily toils forbid it ; but we should be always in his Spirit ; and that is light, that is strength, that is a passport for man to glory.

Upon a subject so full of interest as the moral condition and prospects of those who spend their days in workshops, we should not perhaps be contented with merely announcing general rules, however sound or scriptural they may be. It is commonly supposed that the humble men who are so employed are cut off from the nobler outlets for philanthropy, or from those higher walks in which some move and do great

deeds before the world's view. But no mistake can be more unfounded. The mighty Maker of heaven and earth has debarred no man from doing good, if man himself be inclined; and some of the noblest benefactors of our land or race, have been found among the very classes too commonly supposed to be doomed only to toil. We waive all reference to those who, by their inventions, even while engaged in manual labour, have extended the resources of our empire, and added to the riches of our globe. We pass by those who have risen from among the sons of handicraft to take rank among our lawgivers, our nobles, and other signalized men. We point to only two examples not less illustrious as benefactors than they were humble in their sphere.

HARLAN PAGE was born at Coventry, in Connecticut, in the year 1791, and was taught by his father the trade of a house-joiner. He received a good common education. For twenty years and more he lived without much concern regarding his soul, but in the year 1813, "the one thing needful" really became an object of earnest pursuit. Such was his anxiety and distress on account of sin, that he had frequently to retire from his work to pray. On journeys he often felt constrained to withdraw to some thicket for a similar purpose; and on one occasion, after he had begun to teach a school, his sense of his lost condition as a sinner became so intense, that he felt that he could not again leave the throne of grace till the controversy with his Maker was closed. There, in

the darkness of midnight, and under the guidance, none can doubt, of the Holy Spirit, he consecrated himself to the Redeemer, not merely in the confidence of pardon and acceptance, but with the determination to live and labour to promote His glory in the salvation of the perishing. “When I first obtained hope,” he said on his dying bed, “I felt that I must labour for souls. I prayed, year after year, that God would make me the means of saving some.”

And his prayer was signally answered. Never did Page lose an opportunity of holding up the lamp to souls. By letters, by conversation, by tracts, by prayers, by appeals and warnings, as well as by a holy and an earnest example, did he try to reclaim the wandering or edify the believer. In factories, in schools, and elsewhere, did this mechanic labour, and only the mighty power of grace can explain how one so humble could achieve so much: his life is a speaking comment on the words, “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.” “Our faith in eternal realities is weak,” he cried, “and our sense of duty faint, while we neglect the salvation of our fellow-beings. Let us awake to duty, and while we have a tongue or pen, devote them to the service of the Most High, not in our own

strength, but with strong faith and confidence in him."

Now, the record of this man's life shows that no day was allowed to pass without something done for the good of others' souls. What Page mainly aimed at was the conversion of the unconverted; and the extent to which he was honoured may be viewed as at once an encouragement and a reproof. His own soul was all aglow when he heard of one after another brought to the Saviour. While he wept over men's impenitence, he exulted when he heard they had welcomed the call. He tried to win the young and warn the old, and his pleadings with sinners were sometimes most pathetic. "Shall neither man nor God," he said to one, "hear from your lips, 'O my sins, my sins, I fear they will ruin my soul for ever?' Shall no prayer, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner,' break from your heart?" "You are now in an awful crisis," he said to another. "Your eternal all may depend on the course you take. The Lord has taught you by his Spirit that you are a wretched, perishing sinner. You feel that you have no preparation for heaven, and see nothing before you but eternal woe. O, my friend, *there is a refuge*. The Lord Jesus invites, in melting strains, 'Look to me, and live; come unto me, and find rest!' O go to Him *now*, as you value your precious, your immortal soul."

At other times Page was brief and sententious, but solemn. Seeing four youths, for example, on one occasion employed in some thoughtless course, he accosted

them, and drove this laconic warning like a nail into their conscience, "Prepare to meet thy God!"—and it was blessed. In a word, he sowed beside all waters, and the increase was proportioned to his faith. All this took place amid bodily weakness and daily toil, insomuch that his ailments obliged him at last to seek a change of occupation, and he for some time taught a school during the winter seasons. One hundred and ninety-five pupils passed through the hands of Page in that character. The history of seventy of them is unknown; but of the remaining one hundred and twenty-five, eighty-four are thought to have given evidence of conversion, and six became preachers of the gospel. In another place, fifty-eight were supposed to have been brought to Christ by his instrumentality. Such was the blessing which made him and others rich and added no sorrow.

Nor need we wonder. So intense was the ardour of Page in dealing with souls, that he has been known even in sleep to suppose that he was expostulating with them, and to awake in tears of earnestness and pain. Knowing that every child of the fallen Adam must either be born again, or never see God, he made that the burden of all his endeavours, his prayers, his struggles, and tears. To labour for that became a portion of his very being; and he died as he had lived, beckoning all around him to follow him to be for ever with the Lord.

Here, then, is a man in humble life, without any adventitious aid, without any learning, for many

*years the occupant of a workshop, yet living, labouring, dying to win souls to Christ. He was, indeed, a sweet savour of Christ wherever he went; and should not the example of Harlan Page summon many in his own sphere to go and do likewise? Does it not prove, that if we have the grace of God in our heart, it is not rank, or wealth, or learning, or power, but a willing mind, and consecration to Christ, his cause and glory, that are required to accomplish great things? Let our artizans imbibe the spirit of Page, and then they may be honoured as he was; it may be inscribed upon their tombstones as it was upon his, "He ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears."

JOHN POUNDS was another benefactor to society who deserves to be held in perpetual remembrance. He was born at Portsmouth in the year 1766. By the fracture of a limb, he was forced to change his employment as a shipwright for that of a shoemaker, or rather shoe-mender, for he never rose to the rank of a maker, and as the occupant of a "weather-boarded tenement" in his native town, John divided his time between his awls and deeds of active benevolence. A cripple himself by his accident, he had also the charge of a decrepit nephew; and the boy for some time divided the attention of Pounds with a number of tame birds which he kept from affection or for amusement. By exercising his ingenuity and benevolence at once, he succeeded in restoring some degree of soundness to his nephew: he then undertook

to teach him to read ; and that led him to seek some companion for his ward and pupil, under the wise impression that the one would stimulate the other, and the progress of both be promoted. His pupils gradually increased in number : his love of teaching grew upon him, and the work soon knew no limits but those of John's very humble abode. It was about six feet wide by eighteen in length ; and in that apartment did Pounds, surrounded by his scholars, ply his double avocation of cobbler and schoolmaster. The progress of the scholars was as diverse as the employments of the master ; but he bore all with gladness. He had his eye upon each outcast in the group, and by his expertness he showed that he was a born teacher—his gift lay in training.

As Pounds rose in popularity, the applications for admission to his seminary increased ; and with a remarkable but wise instinct, he selected "the little blackguards" in preference to others, that he might enjoy the pleasure of breaking them in like the wild ass's colt. Some he would allure to his school by such poor bribes as he could command ; and though his labours were unrequited, though he had not the means of purchasing school-books, but taught the alphabet from handbills and fragments of old volumes, yet some hundreds of persons owed all the learning they ever acquired to this facetious, devoted, and humble philanthropist. He helped to keep down the calendar of crime, and sent not a few into life possessed of acquirements sufficient to impart respectability in their

sphere, who, had it not been for John Pounds, the founder of Ragged Schools, might have become the pests or the plunderers of society.

Such, then, is another instance of philanthropy, in one of the humblest of mankind. After this, why wait for some costly apparatus for doing good? Why delay the attempt to make the world better, however humble our sphere may be, when we see one so lowly, yet so honoured—so poor, yet making so many others rich? Nay, with the grace of God in the heart, and love to souls as its invariable attendant, be it the felt duty, the privilege, the resolute vow of all, even in the workshop, to seek to convert some sinner from the error of his ways, and thereby hide a multitude of sins.—As one wanders over the Seven Hills of Rome, he may often pick up a marble fragment of a frieze, a portion of a capital, a volute, or a triglyph, telling of the grandeur which once was there, when the palace of the Cæsars crowned more than one of the hills, and the “Golden House” of Nero formed the glory of the whole. And, in like manner, amid the ruins and the *debris* of our fallen nature, we sometimes find what reminds us of its primal glory, and of the depth to which it has fallen; and yet assuring us, that fallen though it be, it may not have fallen for ever. Benefactors to humanity, like Harlan Page and John Pounds, occupy that rank among men.

There is no weariness to him who works for Christ: he is willing to spend and be spent. No sullen drudgery is his, as if work were only a doom—nay,

rather cheerful work from a glad, emancipated spirit, and joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. That sweetens toil; that braces the arm; that nerves man's spirit for all that can ever come; and even his daily work, as a husbandman, or an artizan, is thus spiritualized into a service to his God.

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGION IN THE MARKET-PLACE.

LET not the design of these chapters be forgotten.

There are few opinions more prevalent among men, than that religion is to be attended to only at certain places or on set occasions. While some entirely neglect it, and live from day to day without one solemn thought of God or the soul, others would attend to it only at fixed seasons, or when established usage calls them. At other times, religion is reckoned an intruder. It interferes with the pursuits, or it interrupts the pleasures of men. It must therefore be kept in its proper place, without venturing to appear in the ordinary business or the common intercourse of life.

The Romanist, accordingly, hurries to Mass; and that over, he hastens away to his holiday, his folly, and his sports. The formalist, whether Protestant or Romanist, complies with his routine, appears at church, or tells his beads, and then dismisses religion from his thoughts. The young leave religion to the old. The old often postpone its claims, till attention to it is useless, unless it could operate like a charm; and thus the one thing needful is the last thing that some will permit to obtain any ascendancy over their minds.

But instead of adopting such maxims, all who are in earnest about the world to come have felt, that

just as the body needs the vital air at all times, the soul at all times needs the guidance of truth; or as the body may die, in the twinkling of an eye, if it be deprived of that which is appointed by God to keep it in life, so the soul cleaves to the dust—it becomes dead to the noblest of all objects, even to God and eternity—when it is not constantly fed or constantly stimulated by the truth which connects us with Him in whom we live, and move, and have our being.

Under the deep conviction of that, we have tried to show how the truth which the Spirit teaches in the Word of God, should be mingled with all that we do. Far from leaving it out of view for a breath, it is a party to all our transactions; it should be a counsellor in all our difficulties, and a guide in all the relations of life. The heart, the home, the workshop; the place of public resort, as well as the place where no eye sees, and no ear hears, but God's, should find us evermore accompanied by the truth, evermore subject to its control, while it directs our thoughts, our words, and deeds, according to the will of God.

We are now, then, to contemplate Christianity in the Market-place, or the place where business is wont to be done. Epithets of contempt have been applied to us as a nation, because of our busy engrossments in the countless departments of buying, and selling, and getting gain; and it cannot but be important to consider the maxims which should guide us in such pursuits.

Now, it is one of the glories of our faith, that it makes ample provision for all the activities of life. Yet, under pretext of being devout beyond the standard of ordinary men, there have been some who fled to deserts, and dwelt in dens and caves of the earth. Professing to seek a closer walk with God, or more ample scope for the culture of the Christian graces, they have forsaken the duties of life, and made themselves useless to society, as if indolence were a virtue, or inactivity a fruit or a proof of true religion.

But any one who will merely glance at the Word of God, may see that such opinions find no sanction there. Far from encouraging inactivity, or exhorting us to forsake the post of duty, and retire to loneliness and seclusion, that Word expressly prohibits such a course. It tells us not to be slothful in business. It says that what our hands find to do, we should do it with all our might. It assures us that we must study to be quiet, and do our own business, and work with our own hands. It adds, that if any man will not work, neither shall he eat. It sets a brand upon those who "learn to be idle, who wander about from house to house, not only idle, but tattlers also." In short, religion, as it lies in the Bible, stands at our side in the place of business, and says, "Be not slothful here;" and adds, "It is the hand of the diligent which maketh rich."—While we gaze on the merchant princes on the Exchange of London, when some exciting rumour has arrived,

some war been proclaimed or threatened, or while some mercantile crash is impending, or some millionaire bankruptcy just announced—we cannot but feel that if men retain their religion amid these excitements, they are religious according to the highest standard that earth can ever know. Not the recluse, not the man whose life is idle, and whose duties are tame and domestic, can display the loftiest style of Christianity; but the man who holds fast his integrity amid the activities of life, and embodies in his practice the scriptural injunction, “Be not slothful in business.”

True, this maxim is often more than obeyed; business absorbs, business agitates, business ruins millions. Surrendering themselves without a check to its engrossments, they are swallowed up by overmuch care, and socially and religiously become wrecks, though they may pile up gold in heaps. How many in this land are making gold their god, and fine gold their confidence, we need not try to tell. But to correct that tendency, the word of truth has commanded our men of busy lives not merely to be active, but, moreover, to be “serving the Lord” by their activity. It is not activity for the sake of amassing wealth; it is not activity merely that we may stand among the foremost in the market-place, or be able, as some have been, to give laws to kings and empires, to make peace or to declare war. That is not religion; it is the enthronement of self. We are to serve the Lord even in our business. His will is to be our

will there, as much as when we are upon our knees before him. The objects to which he points are to be pursued by us; and thus, amid the scenes of busiest occupation, where much that is secular may tend to disturb, or much that is sordid to debase, the man of activity is also to be the man of piety and of Christian principle. Religion is *not* to be kept for set times and set occasions; it is not to be left behind us when we leave our homes: nay, as the Lord is in every place, the fear of him should everywhere preside.

When the Saviour said, "I pray not that thou wouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil that is in the world," he not merely uttered a prayer, but, moreover, announced a rule for regulating duty; and they who have imbibed the spirit of His words, understand the religion of Jesus—a religion most exquisitely adapted to man on earth, a religion at once of ever-doing activity, and of faithful serving the Lord amid it all. There are, no doubt, snares and perils beyond what can be counted to the souls of men, in the engrossments of business. In commerce, through all its branches, as it appears in our land and day, there is much to deaden the soul, much to erase the very thought of God; and hence Mammon is the only god of many. But the reason of that is, not that business is essentially godless, but that men prefer God's gifts to himself. Because he is forgotten, thousands are ensnared; they are as com-

pletely entombed in worldliness, as the corpse that was yesterday interred is entombed in the deep grave where it lies.

On the one hand, then, some are diligent in their business; but they forget to serve the Lord, and so their business becomes the grave of the soul. On the other hand, some would serve Him; but they keep that service apart from their business: they are as worldly there, as selfish, as ready to grasp and to amass, as if responsibility to God could be shut up in the Bible after a passage of it has been formally perused. But the Christian merchant comes in between these two. In the one hand he takes the clause, "Be not slothful in business;" in the other he takes the words, "Serving the Lord." He unites them in his life; that is, he takes religion from the Bible; and instead of separating what God has joined—namely, diligence and godliness—that man is perfectly convinced, because the Spirit of God is his teacher, that success would be a curse, that thousands added to thousands would only augment his woe, were he to leave the will of God out of view in the place of public resort.

With this general truth before us, then, *if we be Christians at all, we must be Christians everywhere*, let us consider some Counsels tending to make us Christians, according to the standard of the Bible. How may I assuredly retain my Christianity in the Market-place, in the haunts of Commerce, or among its busy men? An answer to that question may

serve as a guide through what is, in truth, a deep and dangerous morass.

And the first Counsel we would announce is this : *God is a party in all our transactions in the Market-place*; we are either serving him or sinning against him in all that we do. It is to be feared, indeed, that many forget this simple truth amid their manifold engrossments. They forget that the God of justice is a party in men's unjust proceedings; that the God of truth is a witness to all their falsehood; that He who cannot look on sin is present at every act, detecting fraud and deceit wherever they appear. In very emphatic language, men thus make the Holy One "serve with their sins;" He supplies the power, the skill, the reason, which they pervert into instruments of iniquity against him and fraud upon their fellow-men. But shunning all this, it should be our rooted maxim in the Market-place, and everywhere besides, that that Holy One is a party in all that we do; he is either served or sinned against. We cannot swerve from truth, we cannot violate justice, we cannot let go our integrity, without forsaking Him. It should, therefore, be as firmly rooted in our convictions as the most simple moral truth, that whatever dishonours God cannot benefit us. It should be written on the conscience as with a pen of iron upon a rock, that the man who expects true success in violating the eternal principles of right and wrong, is not merely wicked, but foolish. The man who expects to prosper by "glossy fraud," has already

inflicted a sore degradation on his moral nature. Even though he may be lifted up by wealth to sit among princes, he is, in the eyes of God, a degraded and an outcast creature. He has sold his soul for what must soon be wrung from his grasp. He has bowed down to an idol as senseless, and as unable to bless him, as the stone god of the Hindoo devotee. Though a world were in league to prove the contrary, ungodly gain wraps up a curse in it; and the larger the pile, the more deadly or crushing are its effects. Those were solemn words which Eliphaz spoke to Job: "I saw him taking root, but I cursed his habitation."*

Let God, then, be recognised as a party in all that is done. Be it our maxim, in the market-place as well as on our knees: "Thou, God, seest me;" and it will at once fortify and warn us. He who forgets that simple principle in our busy day, is like one who casts the pilot overboard when the tempest is rising.

The suggestion now offered would at once sweep away those petty encroachments which pass in the world almost without rebuke, but which are an offence to the Holy One. It seemed a small and venial thing to Eve to do what she did, and to Adam to follow her example; but that little thing dragged the world to ruin. And so before God, offences deemed venial by man are seen in the defilement and the hatefulness

* Job v. 3.

of sin. Hence the call to act under the divine eye—to adopt the divine standard—to make God a party in all our proceedings. His holiness, his justice and truth, should at once repress the unprincipled and encourage the pure; and man would then be made upright towards man by being made right with God.

But side by side with that, we must place a second Counsel, not less needed than the other—Watch with care, *lest the engrossments of business should so accumulate as to overlay and crush the godliness of the soul.* Amid the pressure of times like ours, this is one of the greatest perils of the market-place: it is destroying its tens of thousands. Men eagerly plunge into speculation after speculation. They try to extend, to ramify, and engross, till you might suppose they have a home in city after city; nay, in kingdom after kingdom. Not contented with the gains, the competency, or the honest rewards of what they can easily overtake or personally control, many make such haste to be rich, that an empire is too limited for their plans. In their zeal, they embark in scheme after scheme; they wrap themselves round with entanglement after entanglement, till, in some cases, the ends of the earth are not too remote for their desires to reach.

Now, far be it from us to place restrictions where the only wise God places none; far be it from us to limit enterprise, as if all should be domestic, or run in the channels of home. It would be hinder-

ing, not helping Christianity in the Market-place, to define and circumscribe where its Author has not defined. The very sea—that “highway of the nations” which surrounds our island—would rebuke the attempt. Godliness is not to be confined in monasteries, or even to the domestic circle; for if that were the case, then godliness could not be designed for man as man. It would apply only to a fragment of his nature, instead of diffusing the wisdom of Heaven over it all. But if it be that godliness which is the result of grace, and not that which is only a phase of monasticism, there is not a scene, however homely, where it may not preside; nor an enterprise, however grand, which it may not direct. It is only a fragment of religion, or of the truth as it is in Jesus, which would leave the counting-house, or any sphere, without heavenly direction.

The exhortation, “Be not slothful in business,” then, opens a wide door for active energy; and we make no attempt to shut it. But still, there is only a certain length to which any man can proceed without sinning, amid these engrossments and accumulated cares. Bear witness families neglected—family altars thrown down—early hopes blighted—early religion erased from the soul—as speculations and engagements increase. We have no right to laden ourselves with a multitude of cares such as shall overlay, or supplant, or endanger the truth of God in the heart. Every moment may be one of high-toned integrity between man and man; every transaction

may be presided over by purest equity: in the market-place, a merchant prince might blush to be even suspected of the mean, the fraudulent, or the deceptive. But what if these moments and these transactions, so pure in appearance, be so numerous or so engrossing, as to prevent attention to the high concerns of eternity and the soul? What if my mind and my body be so worn out or worn down by these protracted hours of merchandise, that the things which belong to my eternal peace are neglected, or pushed from their proper place, which is *the first*? Am I not sinning against my soul and my God, by such exhausting engrossments? O! how many are ruined—ruined not by dishonesties in business, but by over-devotion to it! not by defrauding a neighbour, but by defrauding their own soul alike of all time and all taste for attending to the one thing needful!

We plead, let it be remembered, for no inactivity, for there are perils in idleness as well as amid the cares of business. If the latter destroy by crushing, the former wastes by rusting. But our urgency converges upon this point—men ought not so to plunge into this world's engrossments—so to be entangled by this world's cares—so to laden themselves with this world's clay—as to leave neither liking, nor time, nor strength, for fervour of spirit in serving the Lord—"Inasmuch as ye did it not unto me," will tarnish the glory of all such doings. Every moment as it passes, in the life of some busy men,

may be a moment of high-souled integrity between man and man; and yet there is danger, *lest all the moments summed together* should be one long act of complicated robbery—a robbery of God, because he was forgotten—a robbery of the soul, because it was neglected for things which often melt as we grasp them—a robbery of those dependent on us for religious guidance and example, because we are strangers at home, or, when we appear there, it is rather as the careworn speculator or the hoarding miser, than as the kindly, genial, sympathizing husband, father, brother, friend.

We know that it is the golden maxim of some, that religion must give way to business. We have been told by one who could stand unabashed on the Exchange, that “*God did not expect us to be too strict in these things;*” and swayed by that maxim, if religion do not give way at the bidding of cupidity, its control is boldly disowned. Now, we need not add, that the man who has adopted such an opinion has at once dismissed the Word of God from his counsels, and consented to forego the use of reason in the highest of all its spheres—he has laid his soul, a manacled victim, on the altar of Mammon. That man is not seeking *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness; that is, he is deliberately setting aside one of the simplest, plainest, and most unequivocal injunctions contained in the Word of the Supreme.—It is well known that, among the ancient heathens, the god of traffic was also the god of fraud. The

Romans, moreover, had a goddess of thieves, whom one of their poets thus addresses :—

O fair Laverna, grant me power to cheat,
And yet appear arrayed in saintly guise;
Let sable night enshroud my deep deceit,
And clouds conceal my fraud from prying eyes.*

—And is there no reason to fear that that spirit has been perpetuated to modern times ?

Now, in these remarks, we have just been enforcing a trite, but profound maxim, “What is a man profited, though he could gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?” Surely men buy gold at too high a price, when their immortal spirits are given in exchange for it. Success in such a case is a terrible disaster, and far better a mercantile crash than eternal ruin. To give ourselves up to the devoted pursuit of the world, and to secure what we pursue, while God and heaven are forsaken, is a calamity to be deplored through all eternity. Better far the cross and the disappointment ; better far the shattered hope and the world’s neglect, than to sit with princes and to forfeit heaven—to rank among those whose gold cannot be counted, and yet to be poor, and wretched, and miserable in the high estimate of eternity—There is an animal which strikes the arm with feebleness the moment it is touched. The muscles are benumbed, the sense of feeling is for the time destroyed, and the affected parts are as if they had been struck by lightning, and in a similar way, do this world’s cares

* “Pulchra Laverna,
Da mihi fallere, da justo sanctoque videri.”—HOR.

benumb or stupify the soul. Its desire for the good and the pure, and its power to enjoy them, are at once destroyed by intense engrossment with the world's cares; and he who has not felt and lamented the effects of such engrossment, should beware, lest his want of feeling be the result of his want of life.

As a Counsel which we believe to be pre-eminently needed, we observe next, that the man of integrity and Christian principle, will, in the Market-place, *comply with none of the conventional maxims of business which are based upon the false.*—Were it our object to enter into these things in detail, it would not be difficult to show to what an amazing extent the false, the pretended, the deceptive, now enter into the business of our commercial or mercantile community. It must be enough to say, that the father of lies has taken possession of ten thousand points in business, and often holds them all at the expense of integrity and truth. Lies are spoken; lies are acted; deceptions are practised; and conscience is all the while prevented from lifting any effectual protest, by the fact that such things are common. Even those channels of public opinion which do not usually adopt the Scriptures of truth as their standard, confess their amazement at the Jesuitical want of ingenuousness, or the incredible amount of dishonesty, which signalizes even those who move in the highest spheres. Descending, that spirit has taken possession of other classes—it has actually come to pass, that

he is deemed simple who is upright, or punctilious who is honest. Nay more, in defending this state of moral degeneracy, there are some who do not scruple to quote the Word of the God of truth. "Be not righteous overmuch," is a favourite passage with some, as if it gave any countenance to him who seeks wealth by disreputable means—by calling that all silk which he knows to be partly made of cotton, or that genuine which he knows to be adulterated, or that perfect which he knows to be defective.—Would that it were superfluous to dwell upon such subjects—that we never had occasion to refer to them and to the Church of God in the same breath! "*Serving the Lord*"—that clause should banish for ever all such things from the practice and the ways of men professing to be Christians, and if they are not banished, we can picture nothing so likely to make religion an offence, and a Christian profession a subject of scorn, to honest worldly men.

Farther, we have been told that there are some in business who will not credit those who make a profession of godliness. They deem that profession a cloak, and they either tear it off or despise it. Now, we reckon that, to a great extent, just a display of the worldly man's hatred to the restraints and the sanctities of religion. He knows that such a profession upon *his* lips would be hypocrisy, and he ignorantly deems it the same in others. Hence his contempt for a religious profession—his distrust of all who make it. Yet, is there no pretext afforded to that worldly man

for the opinions which he holds? If those professing religion are known to imitate examples, or to adopt practices, and act upon maxims which religion repudiates—if they be as grasping as those who make no such pretensions as they do, are they not cheering on the ungodly in their unchristian career? Are they not doing all that they can to assure the worldly man that his views of religion are correct—that it is a pretence, hypocrisy, and a name?

For these reasons, we return to say, that all compliance with customs founded upon what is known to be false, should be shunned in business by a man of God. All should be transparent as sunlight with him. He should never forget, that to escape detection is very different from being honest; and that the man who has committed himself to some course opposed to what is pure, or lovely, or of good report, must either trample conscience out, or endure its gnawings, as fable says Prometheus endured the vulture. There *are* temptations, we grant, in a state of society like ours, where gold is not merely a standard of value in the market-place, but often the standard of character among men. Withal, however, I am not bound to be rich; but I *am* bound not to bring an evil report upon the Christian name. I am not bound to remain in a certain sphere, and there draw a certain revenue; but I *am* bound not to sin. I am not bound to retain my position at the expense of conscience; but I *am* bound not to cheer on a covetous world to ruin by sharing its ungodliness or

smiling upon its falsehood. Nay, by the grace of God, we are to hold fast our integrity. We are to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan," to the most plausible pretext for sinning; and if there be few among our merchant princes who act on such maxims—if they be uncommon in the Market-place—that is because few go to the Word of God for their standard of duty—few, with meekness and reverence to the Holy One, combine in action these three clauses: "Not slothful in business"—"Fervent in spirit"—"Serving the Lord." "One is your master, even Christ." To him we are responsible in every relation; and that responsibility is discharged only when we remember the words: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

But we have only broken ground in regard to Christianity in the Market-place.

It is a universal law, that every soul of man must have an object to pursue. The ambitious man has his object: he pursues it; and if he succeed in his pursuit, he sinks into the grave, crushed perhaps, like Tarpeia of old, by the weight of his success. And the covetous man has his object: he embarks his whole soul in the pursuit; and while a thousand who strive with him fail or are beggared, he who succeeds is perhaps the most signally wretched of them all. And the lover of pleasure has his object of pursuit: he dismisses the fear of God, and, like one who is ambitious of wretchedness, he drinks up iniquity, though along with it he drinks up poison to his soul.

In a word, the fool and the wise man, the young and the old, the ignorant and the learned, all have some master object to pursue. That object may involve destruction, for it may be sinful; or it may tend to dignify and ennoble, for it is pure and holy; but whatever be its character, it is a law in man's nature, that, from the child amused with its toy, up to the hoary patriarch tottering forward to the grave, man must have something to fill and to engross his mind.

Now, the Word of God, which is so exquisitely adapted to man, takes that great law fully into account; and we advert to that again, because it furnishes an opportunity for repeating, that that Word does not repress man's activity—it only tries to give it a right direction: it does not leave man without a pursuit—it only presents him with one which is worthy of his immortal nature. Knowing that man wishes to advance or to rise, the Bible puts a light into his hand, and tells him to be the heir of God, a joint-heir with Christ. Knowing that man seeks to accumulate and amass, the Bible tells of unsearchable riches and treasures in heaven. Knowing that man's strongest impulse is to seek his own happiness, the Bible perfectly responds to that, and offers the very peace of God: it points to a home of everlasting sunshine, without a tear, without one solitary want. There is thus no attempt to suppress, but only to direct, man's aspirations. Nothing that God gave to man is to be extinguished: all is to be sanctified and sublimed.

To make this plain, we observe that all are familiar with the power exercised over the soul by any new object or new pursuit. Begin with the earlier years of infancy. See a little child engrossed with his toy. His whole soul is absorbed by it; for a time it is his world. But present him with some new object; the former is speedily discarded, while the new engrosses the mind as the old had done. Or pass onward from childhood to youth. There also you see the same law prevailing. Mind is never left a blank. The old is discarded, but it is for the sake of the new; and man thus flits from object to object, the last being always the ascendant. Or pass upward to still graver years, and there also the same law prevails. One pursuit, one passion, one object of interest after another sways the heart, alternately expelled and expelling from the soul. The love of God in a converted soul supersedes the supreme love of the world. The pleasures of godliness take the place of the pleasures of sin. The power of the world to come overmasters the power of a present evil world; and thus a wise and exquisite law guides us in religion—a law as simple in its operation as that which keeps the planets in their orbits.

Now, in accordance with that law, our next Counsel is, that the Christian in the Market-place, should never forget that he is not forbidden to seek earthly things *at all*; he is only forbidden to seek them *first*. The Saviour just wished man to prefer what should be preferred—to put eternity before time, and God

before man, and the soul before the body; and wherever men have escaped from the control of blind passion, such a maxim must be approved for its wisdom. To believe that there is both a God and a soul, and yet seek some ephemeral thing before either or both, is surely to outrage reason, as well as to turn aside from the plainest maxims of religion. On the other hand, he who sets the Lord before him has adopted a course which will more than realize the fable of Midas, who turned all that he touched into gold.

And who can doubt that confidence placed or preference given anywhere but to God, will blight and wither all at last? Who can doubt that the accumulated thousands of many who name Christ's name are their god? They seek happiness there. They find all their enjoyment there. These thousands are their rock, their confidence, and their high tower. They not merely seek them *first*, they seek them exclusively. The portion of their heart is there as completely as the confidence of the Hindoo upon Shiva, or of the Romanist upon Mary. It is thus that God is dethroned, and thus that man's blossom often goes up like the dust from the midst of his idolatrous confidence.

But another maxim which should guide us in business, may be thus expressed.—In the Market-place, *never forget what is due to your Christian profession.* We may forget it, but the world will

not; nay, we have seen how prompt men are to condemn us for our oblivion. We may plunge into the world as other men do. Deceived by our own hearts or by the hollow maxims which prevail around us, we may lose sight of the distinction between the frauds of men and the truths of God. But though we may forget to seek first the kingdom of God, the world does not forget that we *profess* to seek it first. Nay, it is lynx-eyed to detect our pretences, and eager to point the finger of scorn at our unmasked inconsistency if we be inconsistent. The world feels that it needs some countenance in its oblivion of God; and it is cheered, encouraged, or a little more at ease, when Christians are oblivious like itself. As we have already seen, there are words spoken, there are deeds done, in many departments of business, which are unequivocally false—describe them to an unsophisticated little child, and he will tell you at once “it is a lie.” Yet it is well known that gentle names are current for such forms of deception, as well as for some of our household arrangements. Glozing pretexts are employed to cover and conceal them, and the uneasy conscience, in spite of common habit, is betrayed by the fetches which are thus made. Even a worldly man’s conscience would start, at least at first, were such things distinctly called fraud, or over-reaching, or a lie. Palliating epithets are therefore thrown over them, like gaudy trappings upon a coffin; and, then, as if a gentle name could conceal an unprincipled thing, men barter for gain the concerns of the king-

dom of God. They often value that kingdom at less than Judas did, when he sold its King for thirty pieces of silver.

Now, all who would be Christians in the Market-place should dismiss and frown down such practices. Remembering what is due to our Christian profession, they should beware lest a stumbling-block be laid in the way of those who watch for a believer's halting, and are happy when he falls. The progress of missionaries in foreign lands is often impeded by the ungodliness of men called Christians; and care should be taken lest similar impediments exist at home. Let no man say that his conversation is in heaven, while he is manifestly grovelling in the dust. Far rather disown the holy name, than drag it down into the fearful pit and the miry clay. Be it remembered again, we do not plead for inactivity; we would limit no enterprise which pure religion sanctions. But neither would we forget for a breath, that the man who names Christ's name must adopt Christ's holy maxims, or that man is at once deceiving the world and betraying the truth of God. Unjustly to benefit ourselves at the expense of another, is to prove that we have not yet learned God's holy law, and still less the Saviour's pure and perfect gospel. The world-side of our religion should therefore be watched with the utmost care; and, amid our daily doings in the market-place, it should often be our thought, *I am a Christian*, and cannot act upon the world's unholy maxims. *I am a Christian*, and must

love my neighbour as myself; I must do to others as I wish others to do to me. *I am a Christian*, and can smile no connivance upon that which nailed my Redeemer to a tree. No matter though the transgression be small; a small sin ruined the world. No matter though it be common; so is eternal ruin. No matter though men reckoned upright do it; their uprightness is a pretence before Him who looks on the heart; and it is because few act upon these plain, decided maxims, that Christ's people are still but a little flock compared with the teeming myriads of world-adoring men.

And the same maxim should guide us in all respects as well as in regard to gain. Am I one of the merchant princes whose ample stores are crowded with youth dependent on me for bread, and helping to enrich me by their industry or skill? Then I am to remember my duty to ward off, as far as is in my power, all that would corrupt or debase them. Not merely a regard to my own interests, but a regard to the souls of those to whom I stand related, should constrain me to this; and if one among these crowds be dishonest or disreputable, I am to take care that his contagion do not spread; that neither my property on the one hand, nor the souls of my dependants on the other, suffer at his hands. I may be deceived, but I dare not connive at deception. To raise the moral tone, I must give time for personal culture and for the training of principle. I must myself set the example. I must countenance and encourage

it. Instead of grinding the faces of the dependent, I am to do them good in the highest sense of all. Instead of amassing wealth by the sacrifice of consciences and souls, I am to honour all men.—The man who acts thus is a benefactor to society: he is elevating his fellow-mortals: he is blessed, and made a blessing.

Consecrate all your gains to God—is another maxim enforced by Christianity in the Market-place. The silver and the gold are his. His is the power which enables us to collect them, and they are all to be laid, along with ourselves, upon his altar. The wisest man our world ever saw said, “Honour the Lord with thy substance.”

Now, this suggestion touches one of the topics which stand most in need of enforcement in an age and a community like ours.—It were needless to tarry to tell how the sin of covetousness is eating into the hearts of men, how greedily they run after gain, and make haste to be rich. The wrestler’s arena, or the racer’s circus of old, never was crowded with more eager or more panting competitors than our marts of merchandise now. Nor need we pause to tell again what degrading disclosures are made, from time to time, and that in the highest spheres, regarding the withering effects of this headlong pursuit. In cases not a few, our boasted mercantile honour, and our integrity as a nation of merchants, have been proved, with painful plainness, to be as

weak to restrain man's passion for gold as a thread of gossamer to bind a ravening lion.

Such exposures, then, and such scenes, are well fitted to warn us to consecrate all we have to God, both in the getting and the using. If the riches of the world have the image and superscription of Cæsar, the Christian's should bear the stamp of the King of kings. There is no scriptural anathema against riches—nay, every gift of God is good in itself; but there are countless anathemas against riches acquired by fraud, or spent without seeking the direction or the blessing of God. The Christian in the Market place is thus taught to use the world as not abusing it, or not to grasp at what may bite like a serpent and sting like an adder. He thus learns to verify what was said of Tyre of old, "Her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the Lord; it shall not be treasured nor laid up." While many never think of God—for one solemn thought of him would dash all their schemes; while self is the centre, the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, of many an adventurer, the Christian will try to gather wealth as his God directs, in channels which his God can bless.

We repeat it; we are permitted to use the world; for there is nothing unnatural, or extreme, or ascetic in the Word of God. We are permitted to *use* the world; but it is only upon the condition that we do not abuse it; and surely he abuses it who defers to the world more than to God; who adopts the world's maxims, and discards God's; who grasps the world's

riches, but is poor toward God; who trembles at the world's frown, but mocks the majesty, the truth, and the justice of God. O, never let the Christian fear to be resolutely honest—his God will provide. He should be encouraged by thinking that, amid all our moral distemper, the world is under the control of a king who will make his laws respected. Baffled we may sometimes be in the world's headlong career; but it is well, it is *best*, that we should be so. He who sees the end from the beginning, and who brings order out of confusion, is doing all things well. He says: "I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay-tree: Yet he passed away, and, lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found." That is one side of the picture: the other is, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

And who has not seen this verified? Men whose hearts the Lord has opened, so that they gave their silver and their gold in thousands, tell us that the more they give, when it is to the Lord, the more are they blessed. That is, "they cast their bread upon the waters, and find it after many days." "They honour the Lord with their substance, and their barns are filled with plenty." "They scatter, and yet increase." "The liberal soul is made rich." "They lend unto the Lord," and receive it back with usury.

On the other hand, from time to time the Mighty One protests, in his providence, against the head-

long and unprincipled pursuit of wealth. What are our financial crises, our commercial crashes, our bankruptcies in stunning succession and surprising amount, what our unemployed labourers, what our beggared merchants, but just a providential corrective to our cupidity? These things occur almost with the precision of system. They can be predicted like an eclipse; their causes are seen and read of all men; and yet, unwarned and untaught, they make haste to be rich, till airy structures and nominal treasures melt away into air, leaving only poverty, perhaps shame and disgrace, as their residuum. The God who has, with a wisdom as unvarying as it is profound, made sin self-corrective, thus vindicates his own laws. Were his Sabbaths observed, our production would be less, and stagnation prevented. Were our merchandise holiness to the Lord, our periodical gluts would be prevented by wiser measures than now prevail. Godliness would thus be great gain. The widow's cruse and barrel would be a better portion, because blessed by God, than the riches which, ever on the wing, are ever fluttering for their flight. *

* "We state it as our opinion, that though the whole business of the world were in the hands of men thoroughly Christianized, and who, rating wealth according to its real dimensions on the high scale of eternity, were chastened out of all their idolatrous regards to it; yet would trade, in these circumstances, be carried to the extreme limit of its being really productive or desirable. An affection for riches beyond what Christianity prescribes, is not essential to any extension of commerce that is at all valuable or legitimate; and in opposition to the maxim that the spirit of enterprise is the soul of commercial prosperity, do we hold that 't is the **excess** of this spirit beyond the moderation of the New Testament, which,

It is thus, then, that God over all proves, to our sad experience, that we forsake our own mercies by forgetting Him in the Market-place—but take an example. Abraham and Lot his nephew, are in their tents near Bethel. A strife arises between their herdsmen, because the grazing grounds were not sufficiently ample for the herds and flocks of both. But Abraham, the man of peace, disliked contention; and though he was the elder, he gave the younger his choice of the country, that they might separate without strife. With primitive simplicity, but also with true greatness of soul, he said, “If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left.”

Lot accordingly chose. Captivated by the rich pastures of the valley of the Jordan, he selected them. His eye was fixed only on what was good for his herds; it was Eastern wealth, in short, which attracted the nephew of Abraham. He did not think of the character of those who dwelt where he was to dwell; and in his hot pursuit of riches, he fared exactly as those who do as he did are faring still. The inhabitants of that garden-like valley were “wicked exceedingly,” but Lot threw himself among them without forethought, and as the result,

pressing on the natural boundaries of trade, is sure at length to visit every country where it operates with the record of all those calamities which, in the shape of beggared capitalists and unemployed operatives, and dreary intervals of bankruptcy and alarm, are observed to follow a season of overdone speculation.”—DR. CHALMERS.

his righteous soul was vexed from day to day. Their "grievous sins" harassed him; and if we may judge from his own conduct, he did not escape contamination. He had at last to haste and flee for his life, lest he should perish in the common overthrow.

And when was it otherwise? Who ever tasted, touched, or handled what pollutes, and yet continued pure? Who ever threw in their lot with godless men, without incurring the risk of sharing their doom? Do not worldly engrossments steal the heart from God? When we have goods laid up for many days, is it not our instant thought, unless a double portion of grace be sought, that we are less dependent now on the Author of every good and perfect gift? The soul thus withers and pines; and if a child of God escape, it is as Lot did from Sodom—"so as by fire." Just as a dislocated limb gives pain to the body, or just as one member wrenched by violence from the rest makes the whole physical frame quake and quiver, the dislocation of a single precept of God does violence to our moral nature. It has been often noticed that the men who are deprived, by whatsoever cause, of the Sabbath rest, soon become the most degraded in a community, they have perished sometimes by their own right hand; and the remark may be generalized so as to include all the laws among the Ten. The man who runs greedily after gain and forgets to consecrate it to God, is thereby self-degraded, and self-ruined in the end.

But perhaps all that we have argued might have been more briefly and more emphatically urged in a few words: "They first gave themselves to the Lord."* That is the true order of procedure on the part of Christian men, and that is the certain prelude to heavenly guidance. All that we have will be dedicated to the Great Proprietor, if we have first learned, as the Spirit teaches, to "present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

Were it our object to exhaust this subject, instead of merely offering some general counsels, we should now proceed to other aspects of the Christian in the Market-place—that place where temptations are so rife, because the world's current is at the strongest. We might refer to the necessity of excluding the engrossments of the Market-place from our hours of relaxation or our home duties, and press such examples as that of Him who left it as a counsel to others, that, they should leave all thoughts of business in their counting-house on Saturday, till their return on Monday.—But enough has been said for our purpose. And now, let it not be forgotten that all we plead for has been actually done in the Market-place by not a few. We urge nothing Utopian, nothing beyond what is written in the Word of God. A man can be both a student of the Bible, so as to regulate his business by its maxims, and yet prosper,

as far as any Christian can care for prosperity ; and that is proved by many examples. If a man, indeed, supposes that his life consists in the abundance that he has, or that the kingdom of God is meat and drink, then the Bible will be discarded ; another god than its will be worshipped. But if it be the rooted conviction of a soul, that it can be rich only in so far as it enjoys the blessing of Jehovah, His word will be found at once a pleasant and a profitable guide. And even though poverty may assail us for abiding by God's simple truth, we must still abide by it. Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God ; and though that maxim may provoke a smile from the devotees of the world, it is the maxim of eternal wisdom notwithstanding. Some whose life was spent in the place of business, of care and speculation, have left it upon record, that such a maxim is the only remedy for the woes of a groaning world.

We know that men cannot live upon their knees, especially in the market-place ; but we also know that, in the most crowded mart, the way to the throne is open, if we have acquired a taste for walking in it. Have we not found some, and these among the busiest of men, who knew how to retreat into the secret place of the Most High's pavilion, so as there to feel the truth of his promise, "My people shall dwell in quiet resting-places and peaceable habitations?" Have they not found a recess for communion with God, where no eye saw, and no ear heard,

but his? If there be first a willing mind, a way to the throne will be found, even in the Market-place, and they who find it are blessed.

Amid all this, we do not forget the difficulties of a merchant's sphere, in an age so bent upon amassing as ours. We are not unfamiliar with his anxieties, his cares, and crosses—crosses which often come upon him mainly because he would set the Lord before him. But just the more on that account, and surely not the less, do we urge him to carry the Lamp of Life. On the one hand, if these anxieties and cares drive us from our steadfastness, and if God be left out of sight, will that diminish our cares? On the other hand, if we hold fast our integrity, is it to be feared that we shall be put to shame at last? Nay, all that we plead for *has been done*: the grace of God can accomplish it, and more. There have been men surrounded with many cares, who yet served the Lord amid them all. They found that Christianity in the Market-place is as much provided for, as Christianity in the place where prayer is wont to be made. All that was needed was to seek the God and the grace of Christianity; they sought Him, and they triumphed. Cheered by the words, "Thou hast a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments," they held fast their integrity as drowning men cling to the cable which is cast for their rescue; and in holding it fast, they secured the heritage which the gold of Ophir could not buy.

It will readily be believed that, in a nation signa-

lized like ours by commercial enterprise and mercantile activity, some have been found among our merchant princes whose proceedings have been presided over by purest Christian principle. If multitudes have sacrificed rather to Mammon than to the Holy One and the Just, some, on the other hand, have held fast their integrity, and sought to keep themselves "unspotted from the world."—Among those who belong to the class who have thus exemplified the loftiest Christian principle in the Marketplace, there are few whose name and memorial stand higher among men than the late Joseph Harcastle of London. Early impressed with religion in its living and energetic form, he made it his guide and close companion through life. The Scriptures were to him the supreme and sovereign standard. He was led by their light to the Saviour of the lost, and, constrained by his love, he rejoiced in every opportunity for promoting His cause and glory. A life of dependence on his Redeemer was only another name for personal holiness; and to personal holiness he added abilities of a superior order, which appeared at once in the world-wide business which he conducted as a merchant, and the efforts of a directly religious nature which he put forth. Among the objects to which Harcastle was devoted, the London Missionary Society was perhaps the chief. In the capacity of its treasurer, he laboured for many years with zeal in the service of Him who has the heathen for his heritage. To the duties of that office

he brought the same sagacity and soundness of view, the same unbending uprightness and lofty integrity, which signalized him as a member of the greatest mercantile community in the world. Even amid the contentions of debate, Hardcastle was calm and gentle: his Christianized nature raised him above the influences of those shocks which ruffle and discompose more common minds; and though nothing could ever sway him to act against truth and principle, his mildness and benignity rendered him the friend of all.

But not merely were Hardcastle's time and energies thus largely devoted to the Saviour's cause. His ample liberalities from year to year, "entitled him to the rank of the first pecuniary benefactor of the London Missionary Society." In short, faith unfeigned was the basis of what he did, whether in the Market-place or amid scenes whose duties appear to some to be incompatible with the assiduities of business. With commercial relations which touched the ends of the earth, Hardcastle spread his influence for good as widely as his merchandise. He proved by his example that it is possible to be at once active in business, and serving the Lord; and our commercial enterprize would rest upon a more solid basis, or be more richly fraught with blessings, were that godliness which is the only solid foundation of true dignity and *completeness* of character cultivated by all, as it was by Joseph Hardcastle.

But his own history was spoken, and his principles were described by himself, in some of the last sen-

tences which he ever uttered. To illustrate these, the following selections may suffice :—

“ Lord Jesus, thou hast said, ‘ He that believeth in me shall never die; and he that believeth, though he were dead, yet shall he live.’ I believe this; I believe I shall never know what death is, but pass into life.”—This is the triumph of faith.

“ Thou hast said, ‘ Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.’ I come to thee; thou wilt not cast me out.”—This is God honoured, and man made happy.

“ Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I am going to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. I am infinitely indebted to him for his conduct of me from infancy to the end of my life. He took me by the hand in a wonderful manner, and brought me into connection with the excellent of the earth. Most gracious God, I commit my children to thee, and I charge them to walk in thy fear and love.”—This is the death of the righteous.

“ He has drawn me with the cords of mercy from my earliest days. He gave me very early impressions of religion, and enabled me to devote myself to him in early life; and this God is my God for ever and ever—for ever and ever. I said to him when I was a young man, ‘ Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.’ ‘ Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth whom I desire besides thee.’ ”

“ No principle can enter the mind so sublime as the doctrine of the cross, which, with infinite majesty, speaks peace in heaven, on earth, and throughout the universe. Let every one of my children glory in the cross of salvation—it is the power of God to every one that believeth. The *power* of God ; what feeble ideas do I attach to such expressions !”

“ I am, in some respects, like the old patriarch Jacob, on his dying bed, with all his sons about him. Live in love, and the God of love will be with you. This is my last farewell ; this is our last interview till we meet in a better world. My flesh and heart are failing. I hope I have not been deceiving myself. My child on seek for an interest in Christ—seek for an interest in Christ. I earnestly exhort you to be decided, and to be very useful. He is your best friend : manifest your regard for him to the world ; avow your attachment ; be not ashamed of him ; he is the glory and the ornament of the universe.”

“ I hope I shall be favoured, when my spirit is departing, with some intimations of approaching glory. I will trust in him—I will trust in him. In the meantime, I possess a sweet peace, calm and undisturbed. I will go to God, my exceeding joy, as the psalmist says. It is an awful thing for a human spirit, deeply depraved as it is, to appear before the tribunal of so mighty a Being. He placeth no trust in his servants ; the heavens are not clean in his sight.”

“ If I am to live,* I welcome life, and thank its Giver; if I am to die, I welcome death, and thank its Conqueror. If I have a choice, I would rather depart and be with Christ, which is far better.”

“ My last act of faith I wish to be to take the work of Jesus, as the high priest did when he entered within the vail; and when I have passed the vail, to appear with it before the throne.”

“ I have just finished my course; I hope also I may say, ‘ I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith; and henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me at that day.’ ”

“ Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Lord Jesus, receive my spirit when it leaves the body: thou hast redeemed it—I have waited for thy salvation.”

—There is much in the life of men whose home is chiefly in the Market-place, to deaden and secularize their spirits; but examples like that of Harcastle tell that grace is almighty even there—even there, were men to honour God, he would honour them. It would be made manifest to all, that even the life of a merchant prince may be spent in the ways of God, and conduct to his eternal home.

* Mr. Harcastle died in his sixty-seventh year.

CHAPTER V.

RELIGION IN THE MARKET-PLACE CONTINUED.

ENOUGH has been said to show that there is no incongruity between the religion of Jesus and the most comprehensive enterprise, if that enterprise be characterised by wisdom, as well as extent. The Bible may reign in the counting-house, as well as in the church; nay, where its power is felt at all, its most signal triumphs are not found amid the scenes where only the Omniscient is our witness, but amid those public proceedings where danger is rife, because the current of the world sets in against the soul at once with the greatest rapidity and the greatest volume. By example after example, it is proved, both in the Word and the providence of God, that His truth embodies the religion of activity. One man, for example, is raised up to take possession of the promised land. He has seven nations to conquer, as well as a numerous people to guide, and amid the manifold engrossments of that position, how is Joshua employed? Had he adopted the maxims merely of the world, he would have drawn the sword, he would have thrown away the scabbard, and in the common language of mortal boasting, he would have determined to conquer or die. But the first sword which Joshua drew was the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. The verse which

directed his steps was this, "Thou shalt meditate on this book day and night . . . for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." That was the secret of Joshua's victories—amid the cares of a camp, he had his God to guide him.

And the man after God's own heart acted in the same spirit. Monarch as he was, and compassed about with all the cares of a kingdom, David made the Word of God a lamp to his path. He could picture no greater self-deception than to suppose that man can find a better guide in difficulty than God—a better Counsellor in doubt—a better Defence in danger. He could not even invent a more flagrant kind of folly than to set aside the wisdom of God, and prefer the wisdom of man; to adopt some human device for remedying man's ills, for soothing man's sorrows or lifting him from his degradation, while we despise the sovereign specific of the eternal God. The climax of all that is irrational is found in superseding God's revealed will, and substituting for it the opinions, the speculations, the dreams of mortal man. David, therefore, placed the Word of God upon his throne beside him. Guided by it, the king was steadfast and unmoveable: Forsaking it, he became one of the chief of sinners; he sullied one of the fairest names.

Or turning from inspired men, to those who had to spread the sacred page before them, and pray to God to shed light upon it, we may glance at the man

whom God raised up, about three hundred years ago, to emancipate a large portion of Europe from Popery, that dark superstition which ever crushes man to the dust. Luther stands alone before the crowned, the mitred, and the lordly. A bigoted emperor holds that solitary man's life in his hand; and had he doomed him to die upon the spot, millions would have rushed to applaud him for the deed. "Recant," that is, deny the Word of God, was in substance the demand made from Luther; and was the demand conceded? Nay; the Bible was to him something better than a collection of syllables and words. The Spirit had made it a power, a life, a soul to that man's soul; and, "I cannot recant, so help me God," was in substance his reply to the crowned, and the lordly before him.

But there is a glare and a grandeur about cases such as these, which may dazzle yet more than instruct. Let us pass then to a different scene, and seek some abode of poverty. We are, perhaps, afraid to enter, so repulsive, or unpleasing is all that meets the eye. In that rude home, which every wind of heaven can penetrate, we find a dying one. Perhaps for a quarter of a century, she has been the inmate of that abode; for all that time, she may have had no hand but the hand of God, and of charity, to feed her. What, then, is it that has sustained her spirit, amid trials which we almost shudder to see? She has lived, and is now preparing to die, upon the Word of her God. She is strong in the strength

which it supplies, and the home which looks so cheerless to others, has been to her a home of hymns and of rejoicing. The God of the Bible has made her glad in the house of her pilgrimage by means of his Word. She has learned to regard it as God himself does; and it is visibly magnified in the effects which it thus produces in souls by nature weak, wavering, and ungodly.

But we have not nearly exhausted the illustrations of the power of truth in the Market-place. We have looked at some proofs of its power where it is honoured and obeyed: let us now glance at some of the results of neglecting it. If some men are of opinion that their main business upon earth is to "buy and sell, and get gain;" the Holy One has, on the other hand, made it plain that there is another God besides "the Mammon of unrighteousness."

We have referred to the crashes, and the failures, the gluts and stagnations which occur in trade, with a periodicity which can almost be calculated—they can at least be easily foreseen as they approach. The adventurous "traffickers," are sometimes seized with a mania which turns the counting-house into a gambler's den, involving results and disasters from which the most judicious can with difficulty escape; so powerful is the current, so ingulfing the suction. Let us glance at some of these seasons.

And the first which we mention is, the mania for dealing in Tulips, which engrossed even so calm and sedate a people as the Dutch, about two centuries ago.

It began about the year 1634, and, like a violent epidemic, it seized upon all classes of the community, leading to disasters and misery such as the records of commerce, or of bankruptcies, can scarcely parallel. In their "haste to be rich," one of the most temperate and self-possessed of all the nations of Europe rushed upon a ruin which affected thousands, and plunged multitudes into penury for life. In the year 1636, Tulip Marts had been established at Amsterdam, at Rotterdam, Haarlem, Leyden, and other towns in Holland.* As happens in all gambling transactions many were speedily enriched. Their fortunes, it has been said, rose like exhalations from the earth, but in many cases they vanished as speedily. Nobles, citizens, farmers, mechanics, seamen, footmen, maid-servants, even chimney sweeps—all caught the fever for tulips and gold. Houses and lands were either sold for what they would bring in the market, or pledged, and bartered, that men might get possession of the coveted bulb or blossom. Amid these things, the prices of food, and other necessities of life, rose to an unprecedented extent; and so complex, so ramified and pervasive did the tulip trade become, that special laws were passed to regulate it; special functionaries were appointed to direct it; in a word, amid the activities of Holland, then perhaps the foremost nation in the commercial world, a frail, ephemeral flower became literally the representative

* See Mercantile Morals by Rev. W. H. Van Doren, chap. iv.

of man's wealth, or the object on which the hearts of thousands doated.

Nor were these negotiations confined to the great central emporiums. Every village had its market-place for tulips; festive meetings were held when sales were effected; and the universal favourite—a tulip, was the constant decorator of such festivities. The learned and the ignorant, the cautious and the eager, men of all classes and all temperaments, were infected; it seemed as if the commerce of the world were henceforth to run in one exclusive channel—the sale and the purchase of tulips. The eagerness with which men embarked in these wild speculations may be best explained by a statement of simple facts.* Property to the value of 100,000 florins† was invested in the purchase of a few roots. One kind of tulip, the *Admiral Leifken*, was reckoned worth 4,400 florins. A *Semper Augustus* was deemed cheap, if purchased for 5,500 florins. At one period there were only two roots of that rare species in Holland; and so intense was the passion to possess them, that a merchant offered twelve acres of building lots for one of them, which was at Haarlem, while its neighbour of Amsterdam was purchased for 4,600 florins, a carriage, a span of grey horses,‡ and a complete suit of harness. A *Viceroy* was worth 3000 florins. An *Admiral Vonder Eyk* was rated at 1,260

* See Mercantile Morality, chap. iv.

† The Dutch florin is worth about two shillings.

‡ A span of horses means a team or pair of *marches* for a carriage.

florins; and the whole were sold by weight as carefully as jewel merchants weigh the diamond. But to name no more, there was a single root which cost two lasts of wheat, and four of rye; four fat oxen, eight fat swine, and twelve fat sheep; two hogsheads of wine, and four tuns of beer; two tons of butter, one thousand pounds of cheese, a complete bed, a suit of clothes, and a silver drinking cup, valued in all at 2,560 florins.

Such is a glimpse of the tulip mania—such the effect of man's extraordinary haste to be rich—such the condition into which men proverbial for their sobriety of judgment were precipitated, when they pushed their speculations beyond their legitimate channels.

And what was the result? How did a passion so extraordinary affect those who had been impelled by its power? The bubble burst at length, and though a fierce tornado had swept over Holland, the devastation could scarcely have been more complete. The hopes which had been so unnaturally inflated began to collapse. Panic seized upon the speculators, and bankruptcy followed panic, as rapidly as the house which is built of cards is demolished by a blow. It soon appeared that tulips were neither gold, nor houses, nor lands; neither bread for the hungry, nor clothing for the naked, nor a home for the friendless; and the worthlessness of the flower in itself, became the emblem of the delusions which it had fostered. Every town in Holland felt the blow. Multitudes were precipitated into poverty, at least, their only

possessions consisted in a few bulbs—the representations at once of the speculator's thoughtlessness and his woe. The result of the folly was now manifest, and the madness of what was nothing but gambling, showed its bitter fruits. Merchants and their families who had lived all their lives in independence and luxury, were reduced to beggary by this mania for gold.

Amid these calamities, the help of man was found to be signally vain, and those who had forgotten to take the Bible into the Counting-house, and the Market-place, were left to reap as they had sowed. Every effort was made to arrest the tide of ruin. Law was appealed to. The governing power of the nation was addressed, but all in vain. The gourd had withered, the refuge of lies had fallen, and not a few were buried in the ruins. The trade of Holland was prostrated for a time, and some of its merchant princes never recovered from the shock.

It was by such a mercantile crash, then, that He who rules among the nations protested against the folly, or the sin of such gambling. It was proved, upon a national scale, that men cannot trample on the wisdom which comes from above, and prosper; and over the whole transaction, the eye of faith can read many a text inscribed in letters of light, we learn how much Commerce would be aided throughout her extensive empire, were her measures regulated by the mind, and directed to the objects of God. “He that makes haste to be rich shall not be innocent.”

“Trust not in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.” “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, and in measure.” “By humility and the fear of the Lord, are riches, and honour, and life.” “Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for He hath said, ‘I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.’”—These and many other passages of the Word, proclaim the folly of extinguishing the lamp, and yet hoping to walk in the light. He who shall really prosper in such a path, will be the first in all the world’s history; but his prosperity will rest upon the ruins of truth, and justice—of all that is pure, and lovely, and of good report.

But this appears after all, to have been a mere hallucination. It may be reckoned the dictate of capricious fashion, rather than a manifestation of the true mercantile spirit. Let us turn, then, to another illustration, and we find it ready in the Mississippi Scheme of France, which was begun in 1716, and continued till 1723. Of all the wild speculations which have first duped and then ruined men, this ranks among the foremost. It was projected by a man who spent an ample fortune by his prodigality, and then adopted a gambler’s life, the last resort of many a fallen spirit. He first ruined a young English lady and then slew her brother in a duel, for which he was obliged to flee from his native country. Amsterdam, Venice, and Genoa, became

in succession his asylum. From each of these, however, he was banished as a dangerous adventurer; and after fourteen years of friendless wandering, he at last secured the patronage of the Duke of Orleans, while Regent of France, about the year 1716.

Such was the unprincipled and profligate man employed to launch the Mississippi Scheme. He began his career in Paris by establishing a bank, which aided in restoring the drooping commerce of France to some measure of activity. Success in one enterprize prepared the way for another, and Law devised the scheme which has given such bad notoriety to his name, and was the occasion of a ruin so wide-spread that only Omniscience knows it. A French colony at the mouth of the Mississippi occupied lands which were supposed to teem with gold; and, on that supposition, men who knew of no better riches than those of earth, rushed into a wild and visionary scheme. The Regent sanctioned the undertaking, and notes were issued to the amount of one thousand millions of livres.* One hundred and twenty *per cent.* of profit were promised upon all investments; and the baseless proposal so captivated men who were willingly fascinated, that at least three hundred thousand applications were made for fifty thousand shares. The titled, from the right hand of royalty downward, engaged in the scramble;

* A livre is equal to about 10½d. English.

and their equipages blocked up the streets from day to day, as they waited in feverish anxiety to know the result of their application for a chance of sharing in the fabulous wealth.—It is known that when one maniac has committed suicide in any particular way—for example, by precipitation from the summit of a tower—others morbidly follow his example; and one is irresistibly reminded of that development of mania while tracing the history of the Mississippi Scheme.

But, after all, it was still only in its infancy. The Regent created three hundred thousand additional shares;* and so grasping were even the coroneted gamblers of Paris, that three times that number would have been purchased had the scheme been extended so far. The pressure for shares became so great, that a number of persons were crushed to death in the crowd. Property suddenly rose in value, till it was worth twelve or fifteen times as much as it had been a brief period before; and so unwearied were these devotees of Mammon, that the streets had to be cleared at night by the soldiery. For a time, even the gaieties of Paris were suspended; and all the energies, the earnestness, and ardour of its people, were turned into one absorbing channel—the passion for gold lying buried, they believed, in the lands around the mouth of the Mississippi!

So ceaseless was the murmur of these speculators, and so loud, that the Chancellor of Paris, whose

* See Mercantile Morals, chap. iv

court was in the neighbourhood of the bank, could not hear the advocates as they pled. About five hundred pavilions were in consequence erected at some distance, for conducting the business. The engulfing tide rolled on. Peers and peeresses continued among the suitors for Mississippi stock, and sometimes stood for six hours in succession, waiting for an interview with an agent. In truth, all classes were seized with a mania similar to that which reigns paramount in the mind of a gambler, and which often goads him on to ruin. Amid the excitement, society became more and more distempered. The ignoble, who had become suddenly rich, purchased alliances with the titled. Robberies and murders took place, and a Count D'Horn was tried and condemned to be broken on the wheel for one of these deeds of blood. Such was the influx of strangers into Paris, that houses could not be found for their accommodation. Tents and stables were transmuted into dwelling-houses, and an artificial prosperity was produced, which quadrupled the cost of some articles. In a word, it appeared that Louis XIV. had been succeeded by Midas, a prince who turned all that he touched into gold.

But this bubble also burst. The scheme was too baseless, and the prosperity too artificial to last; and again it was seen in one of the greatest nations of the earth, that "he who makes haste to be rich shall not be innocent," as he certainly is not safe. To all the golden visions of France there succeeded

a period of confusion, of bankruptcies, of beggary and ruin, deep and piteous in proportion as the excitement had been high. Those who were trembling on the verge of ruin, or actually precipitated into it, surrounded the palace of the Regent, and holding up the worthless bills of Law, which were now all the property they possessed, exclaimed against the injustice with the vehemence of beggared men. The projector of the scheme was exiled to Pontoise. A few realized wealth by the speculation, but it is computed that millions were utterly beggared: many "laid violent hands upon themselves, and sought a doubtful refuge in the grave."

And thus, by another providence, did the only wise God protest against the burning passion for gold which had eaten into the souls of multitudes. Men

" Abrogate as roundly as they may,
The total ordinance and will of God,"

but in spite of their attempts, he accomplishes all his purposes, and all his pleasure stands. He who loves silver shall not be satisfied with it. He who says to the fine gold, "Be thou my confidence," sooner or later finds that he has pierced himself through with many sorrows. Wherever the will of God is violated by nations or by individuals, a day of retribution comes, as surely as rivers which have burst their banks carry devastation wherever they rush.

It is well known that the channel of the Po, as it approaches its embouchure, is considerably elevated

above the surrounding country. The earth which it washes down from the Alps is gradually deposited where the river runs more slowly. The banks, in consequence, require to be periodically elevated; and were that neglected, the river would soon sweep them all away, and render some of the most fertile portions of Italy a wide and noxious marsh, a focus of malaria and fever. Now, it is the same wherever man's cupidity has thrown up artificial mounds in Commerce. They are always attended with danger, and sooner or later they are swept away. It is the sure decree of God: "He that loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loves abundance with increase."

One such illustration may suffice for all: but there is another memorable Scheme to which it seems proper to refer—that which is known in this country as the South Sea Bubble. About the beginning of last century, an opinion generally prevailed that the wealth of South America was exhaustless. A privileged Company to trade with it was accordingly formed, and though the genius of the French and the English are widely different, a passion for speculation and gold seized upon our countrymen, as violent and absorbing as that which appeared in connection with the Mississippi Scheme of France. By various devices, in which the principles of the Word of God were outraged, the managers of the South Sea Scheme excited expectations of the most visionary kind. The mania seized upon the nation through

all its borders. The stock of the Company rose till it was eagerly bought at a premium of 1000 *per cent.* Catching the general spirit, joint-stock companies sprang up everywhere as rapidly as the Prophet's gourd; and so willing were men to be deceived, that schemes which should have been put down on their first appearance were eagerly embraced. One of these was denominated, "A Company for carrying on an Undertaking of Great Advantage, but nobody to know what it is;"* and yet Englishmen, proverbially calculating and cautious in their financial affairs, actually embarked in that transparent deception, like men infatuated by their haste to be rich. The projector of the scheme asked a deposit of £2 on each share of £100, and the promised return was £100 *per annum.* On the first day of his scheme he received about 1000 deposits, or nearly £2000, and with that sum he immediately and for ever disappeared. In this manner, the original South Sea Scheme branched out into eighty-seven cognate speculations, each of which was eventually a fountain of misery to multitudes.

The following sentences graphically tell the state of London and this kingdom at the period referred to:—"From morning till evening, 'Change Alley was filled to overflowing with one dense moving mass of living beings, composed of the most incongruous materials, and in all things, save the mad

* See Dr. Boardman's "Bible in the Counting-House," p. 132.

pursuit wherein they were employed, utterly opposed in their principles and feelings, and far asunder in their stations of life and the professions which they followed. Statesmen and clergymen deserted their high stations to enter upon this grand theatre of speculation and gambling; and churchmen and dissenters left their fierce disputes, and forgot their wranglings upon church government, in this deep and hazardous game they were playing for worldly treasures, and for riches which, even if won, were liable to disappear within the hour of their creation. Whigs and Tories buried their weapons of political warfare, discarded party animosities, and mingled together in kind and friendly intercourse, each exulting as their stocks advanced in price, and murmuring dissatisfaction and disappointment when fortune frowned upon their wild operations; and lawyers, physicians, merchants, and tradesmen, forsook their employments, neglected their business, and disregarded their engagements, to whirl giddily along with the swollen stream, to be at last ingulfed in the wide sea of bankruptcy. Men of the highest rank were deeply engaged in stock-jobbing transactions; and investments in the most worthless bubbles of the age were made by them in heavy sums, and without the least hesitation or previous inquiry. Females mixed with the crowd, and, forgetting the stations and employments which nature had fitted them to adorn, dealt boldly and extensively in the bubbles that rose before them, and, like those

by whom they were surrounded, rose from poverty to wealth, and from that were thrust down to beggary and want, and all in one short week, and perhaps before the evening which terminated the first day of their speculations. Ladies of high rank, regardless of every appearance of dignity, and blinded by the prevailing infatuation, drove to the shops of their milliners and haberdashers, and there met stockbrokers whom they regularly employed, and through whom extensive sales were daily negotiated. In the midst of the excitement, all distinctions of party and religion, circumstances and character, were swallowed up. Bubbles were blown into existence on every hand, and stocks of every conceivable name, nature, and description, were issued to an incredible extent."*

But this also came to an end; and disasters followed which rent society like an earthquake. The leaders in the scheme were consigned to prison, or compelled to seek refuge in exile; while their deluded victims were left amid poverty, and its attendant woe, to gather the native fruit of the thorns and the thistles, from which they had expected grapes and figs. It was miserable comfort to reflect, that their own baseless expectations had abetted the delusion, and made the ruin complete.

And such is another illustration of the effects which follow the infatuation of putting Mammon in the place

* *Hunt's Merchant's Magazine*, quoted in Boardman's "Bible in the Counting-House."

of God, or delivering up the whole soul to the pursuit of what the Holy One declares to be unsatisfying as a dream. It is thus that he warns men, in his providence, against that lust of speculation, which is often as ruinous as the lust of power, or any passion which drives men headlong upon misery.

The very titles of some of the schemes which were projected at the period now referred to, stamp them with infatuation. The nation had become an aggregate of gamblers, and the following are some of the stakes:—

A Company for Increasing Children's Fortunes.

A Company for Furnishing Funerals in any part of Great Britain.

A Company, already mentioned, for carrying on an Undertaking of Great Advantage; but nobody to know what it is.

A Company for Making Looking-Glasses. Capital, £2,000,000.

A Company for Improving Malt Liquors. Capital, £4,000,000.

A Company for Insuring all Masters and Mistresses against Losses by Servants. Capital, £3,000,000.

A Company for Importing Walnut Trees. Capital, £2,000,000.

A Company for Erecting Hospitals for Illegitimate Children. Capital, £2,000,000.

A Company for Erecting Loan-Offices. Capital, £2,000,000.

—But we need not enumerate more. In that scramble for riches, reason appears to have been befooled. Departing from the law of God, men were left to starvation: "They that did feed delicately, are desolate in the streets: they that were brought up in scarlet, embrace dunghills." What though one, or two, or a few realized wealth, and withdrew in time from the engulfing vortex? The wide wail—the desolating explosions which followed, were poorly compensated

for by these exceptions. What though some might be charioted to-day, who yesterday lived by the sweat of their brows? To-morrow will see them more wretched than before. What though artificial standards have elevated a nominal wealth to the value of Potosi or Golconda? Broken fortunes, broken characters, broken hearts, are the sad realities which close the vista. And thus, would men learn, they might; it is written in light above us, according to the words already quoted: "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase." If covetousness be idolatry, and Mammon the idol, his devotees are taught that disaster and woe are their lot.

Yet men have not been warned by all these things; nay, the same spirit has revived in very recent years; and could we unveil the misery which has been endured by thousands as the result of recent crashes, the impression might be deepened as to the madness of "making haste to be rich." Men have said, "To-day or to-morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there for a year, and buy and sell and get gain;" but ere the year was closed, their gains have taken to themselves wings. The will of God was left out of view in their plans, and they were baffled.

We must repeat—we have no controversy with commercial enterprise, when conducted in accordance with the wisdom of the Word of God. It is one of the means of binding nation to nation, and bringing back the alienated children of men to one wide family

circle, according to the purpose of our Father who is in heaven. But that is not to be accomplished by outraging his laws; and the man, the company, the nation, which extinguishes the lamp, will be left to walk in darkness.—When the butchers of the first French revolution were leading their victims to death, some of those who were doomed to die, were conducted, by a refinement in cruelty, along an alley into a garden of flowers, where only fragrance and beauty greeted their senses; but at a certain spot, inevitable doom awaited them, at the hands of men who thirsted for their blood—and we need scarcely apply the illustration. In their haste to be rich, men seem, for a season, to walk amid fragrance. Their path is all luminous with hope—such hope as man's devices can inspire; but sooner or later they are hurried into misery.

“When infamous venality, grown bold,
Writes on his bosom, ‘to be let, or sold,’”

men have laid a snare in which, by God's decree, they will be entangled; they have dug a pitfall, in which, by God's decree, they will be taken.

CHAPTER VI.

RELIGION IN THE PROFESSIONS :—I. THE PHYSICIAN—
II. THE LAWYER—III. THE DIVINE.

THERE are many symptoms of the reviving power of religion in our day. Some of the great questions which enter into the very heart of society are connected with the claims of truth upon the one hand, or the pretensions of those who would suppress it upon the other. The high courts of Parliament are convulsed by religious discussions. When wars arise, or are threatened, they often owe their origin to topics connected with religion. Periodicals which began their career in indifference or antagonism to the truth, are now obliged to do obeisance to it, if they would command the attention of men, and some even of those whose opposition was once a mixture of sneers and acrimony, have now to borrow weight and influence from doctrines which will be found ascendant when every form of error shall have vanished away. In a word, empires, countries, households, individual souls, are alike proclaiming that the kingdom of our Father who is in heaven must come—that His will must be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

Nay more, there is a kind of Christianity even among our infidels—that is, they owe not a little of what they hold to the very system which they

disparage and affect to ignore. The truth is thus producing effects even in spheres from which men would gladly banish it, but into which it is making its way, like a rising tide, in spite alike of the indifference and the hostility of men. The friends of truth are thus encouraged. The collected light of the past and the present is projected into the future. Our nation, and the progress of truth within our borders, is a type of the world. In due time, religion will rule all; either the sceptre of love will guide, or the rod of iron will dash the nations.*

In no respect, perhaps, is this progress more apparent than as regards the Medical Profession. In ancient times, it was proverbially true, or alleged, that wherever there were three physicians, there were two atheists;† that is, the majority of that profession were then deemed atheists, or atheistic. How changed now! Many are, no doubt, still living without any recognition of God. They refuse to be illumined by the light which irradiates others, and grovel amid the grossness of material things, instead of soaring, as they might do, to the spiritual, the heavenly, the eternal. But others, led by the Supreme Wisdom, do soar to these. With religion for their directress, they are skilled in the remedy of the soul as well as of the body. They can occasion the melody of spiritual joy and spiritual health, as well as promote the blessedness which originates in the well-being of the

* Psalm ii. 9-11.

† "Ubi tres Medici, duo Athei."

body. An accomplished physician of our day has said, and said with truth: "Every medical practitioner, whether he desires to have it or not, has a cure of souls as well as of bodies. He is literally an inheritor of some of the duties of the very apostles, and called to be an imitator of the Lord Jesus Christ."* Now, as no sphere could be named where Religion is confessedly more required, let us consider it for a little in connection with the Medical Profession.

I. Conversant daily with death, or walking from hour to hour along the verge of the grave, and in sight of eternity, there is some danger lest these great realities should lose their power—that is, lest the mind should become indifferent to all that is most solemn in the lot of man. And what is the antidote? There is none, except a constant realizing of eternal and spiritual things. The mind must be kept constantly under their influence, or the proverb as to the atheists will be at least practically realized. Deprived as Physicians often are, of the repose of the Sabbath, and all opportunities for worshipping the Father of our spirits, they need a double portion of religion in the soul.† If it be not possessed, then for the same reason as soldiers and seamen are profligate and abandoned, till their profligacy be pro-

* Lectures on Medical Missions, Lect V., by Dr. G. Wilson.

† Gouge, in his "Surest and Safest Way of Thriving," tells of an eminent physician of his day, Dr. Bathurst, that "all his Lord's-day fees were kept as a bank for the poor."

verbial, do those who tend our bodies sink into deeper spiritual darkness than others. Though familiar with death, they are not warned, as other men are, of the need of preparing for what follows the all-decisive change. Accustomed to devote their thoughts and their care—sometimes, perhaps, with feverish anxiety—to the body, they are in danger of forgetting its immortal occupant. Many do forget it, and gaze on the power of that ruthless destroyer who has baffled all their skill, with as little thought as a sexton on a coffin, or on the fragments of the dead which he dishumes with his mattock. Regarding the body as the man, and overlooking all beyond it, a gross materialism becomes dominant in the mind; and unless a divine, a living, and spiritual religion occupy the soul, as the antidote to this danger, the most skillful physician may just become practically the most thorough materialist.

Nay, far more: such a physician must often see the mind of the dying utterly dependent on the state of the body. It is delirious or calm—it is soothed or agonized—it is torpid or restless, just according to the stage of the disease. This at least is commonly the case; and accustomed to that spectacle, the physician who watches, perhaps with deep sympathy for the sufferer, over every new phase of the disease, almost in spite of himself regards the patient as a piece of mere materialism. It is upon the material part that his thoughts are fixed, or his skill brought to bear. He thus magnifies his office, and

hence his danger; hence the grossness of some of the more vulgar minds among physicians; hence the perils even of the purest and the most scientific.

But hence, also, the need and the preciousness of pure and undefiled religion. Hence the mercy implied in the revelation of a spiritual Teacher, the very Spirit of God, to ward off that danger, and give reality and prominence to the things of the soul. Hence a loud call to those who know that there is a spirit in man, to realize its existence and seek its welfare. Hence the need of solemn impressions of the truth of God, in all that is said to fix our thoughts upon the soul, its condition and its destiny. Hence, in short, if any man needs a personal religion—that is, a religion for himself, a Saviour for himself, repentance, faith, love, hope, holiness, all for himself—it is the man who lives on the confines between life and death—who has to do with the body when affection clings to it most closely; and who is apt to forget the inmate while attending to its abode—the immortal, while concentrating his skill upon the transient dust.

Or farther; no intelligent physician can practise for a single month without having the connection between sin and disease forced upon his notice. He may be too thoughtless to attend to it, or too gross to think of it at all; but whether he think of it or not, the fact is unquestionable—there is a necessary, a divinely-appointed connection between crime and disease. The bloated drunkard and the wasted

debauchee, the premature death of many a youth, the madness of many a maniac—all proclaim the beneficent decree of God, that suffering shall follow sin. Now, can it be rational for men to be daily cognisant with that connection, and do nothing to counteract it? Maintaining a daily conflict with pain, shall they ignore its origin? Are they benevolent or merciful, who assail the bodily disease, but neglect the divine antidote for the soul? Nay, am I not conspiring against the immortality of self-deluded man, if I know a cure for that mortal ailment which has seized on the very vitals of his being, and yet hide it from his view? Rather let me press it kindly on his notice; and that I may learn to do so with tenderness and tact, let me make sure that it has attracted my own, that my soul is illumined by its radiance and animated by its hopes.

Physicians, moreover, have often to deal with the insane; and, though it be one of the grossest of all libels against the Gospel of peace, to allege that it ever produces insanity, it is no less true that exaggerated, distorted, and false views of some doctrines of revelation may intensely agitate the soul. Extreme degrees of remorse for sin committed, and felt in its sinfulness against God, may convulse the whole man, till reason totter on its throne. With such cases the physician may be called to deal; and if he be ignorant of the power of religion, or prejudiced against it, not a cure, but an aggravation of the malady, may be expected to result. Religion is now among the

universally accredited means of cure in well-ordered Institutions for the insane; and he who is ignorant of the soothing power of God's pure truth in the conscience of a believer, is ill adapted to apply that remedy with effect. Hence the need of personal religion in those who watch for the diseased; hence the need of the Spirit's teaching, that he who is a guardian of the body's health may know how to promote the soul's; and *that* no physician will know till the Saviour be a Saviour to him, and the great question, "What must I do to be saved?" be practically adjusted.

And when we think of the position in which the patient is commonly seen by the physician, the reasons why religion should reign paramount in the latter become more cogent still. The afflicted are, in some sense, at the mercy of the physician. The skill of the medical attendant is the sheet-anchor of the sufferer. Actions, words, and looks, are carefully watched and scrutinized, as if destiny were in them. The physician has given relief from pain: he has, perhaps, brought back the patient from the verge of the grave; and hence the one feels that the other is, for the time, the very life of his life. Now, for what purpose should all that ascendancy be employed? Should it be used merely to amuse the sufferer, or beguile his thoughts for a little away from the prison-house into which sickness has converted his chamber? Ah, no; but for higher, holier ends: if that physician have religion in his own soul,

he will use his influence as a means of medicating the soul of the sufferer, by turning his thoughts to Him who kills and makes alive; and where that is neglected, opportunities the most precious are lost—a talent which might reproduce itself more than a thousand-fold is guiltily hid in the earth.

Nor should we fail to notice the influence for good which may be exerted over the relatives of the diseased in times of sickness and sorrow. When the ploughshare of trial has torn up the heart, a physician can drop in the seed which bears fruit unto holiness, if he love souls, or be wise to win them. Grief is indulged before him, which is pent up in the presence of others; fears are expressed, dark forebodings appear, which none but the physician is permitted to witness. Confessions also are sometimes made, or secrets disclosed, which throw the door for doing good more open still; and, amid all these things, only one explanation can be given, if the opportunity be not seized—that physician has no love for souls; he does not know their value; eternity is a name to him. True, there is a professional etiquette to which many defer, and which it would be wrong, in its own place, to violate. But that etiquette is worldly or morbid which stands in the way of loving men's souls, or seeking to do them good; and such love will watch for ways for displaying itself amid a crowd of obstacles.

It has been the conviction of some Christian physicians, that none but a Christian can discharge

aright the high duties of their profession. In its widest sense, we adopt the maxim; it is specially true in regard to the necessity which exists for subordinating all to the high interests of that life where "there shall be no more death."—It is in this way that the Saviour's example is best copied and the Saviour's glory best promoted. What physicians only attempt, He accomplished. They strive to prolong life; He is the life itself. They are often physicians of no value; He dispenses the balm that is in Gilead; He is the physician there. "This great Physician!" one exclaims, "this great sufferer! this vanquisher of death! this possessor and granter of an endless life, the Lord Jesus Christ, God over all, is the true Head of our profession;" and blessed is that physician who has learned, from his Head in glory, to watch for the souls, while he sheds blessings upon the bodies, of men.

Nor are we merely theorizing here. Some physicians, in all countries and ages, have been alive to this view of their profession. Boerhaave, for example, was a physician in such practice, that princes, ambassadors, and even Peter the Great, had to remain for hours in his ante-chamber before they could be admitted to an interview; and yet it was his constant habit to devote the first hour of every day to prayer and meditation on the Word of God—a practice which he recommended to others, as the source of that vigour which carried him through all his toils. Harvey, the discoverer of

the circulation of the blood, tells us that he never dissected the body of an animal without discovering something in which he had to recognise the hand of an all-wise Creator. William Hey, a surgeon of eminence, is described as one of those who fear God in youth, who walk with him through life, and to whom the hoary head is therefore a crown of glory. Arrested by the words, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature," and affected by the love of God in the Saviour, he devoted himself, *first* to that which God puts first—the soul. The holy duties and holy pleasures of the Sabbath rest were zealously cultivated by Hey; in short, he escaped from the dangers of his profession, because he was afraid of them, and adopted the divine means of safety. His "support and comfort were found in believing views of the atonement made by Jesus;" and, resting there, he was blessed and made a blessing. And Jenner, the discoverer of vaccination, is to be ranked in the same class—but we need not particularize. As we examine the records of the past, physician after physician rises up before us qualified to minister to the soul as well as the body; and some of them actually doing so. Driven by the perils of their profession, they sought the wisdom of "God only wise," and were guided by his Spirit in the path whose end is glory.

Let us, however, single out one example of a devout physician, and contemplate the ascendancy of pure and undefiled religion in his life and death.

Dr. John Cheyne was born at Leith in the year

1777, and obtained a medical degree at Edinburgh in 1795. After various attempts to establish himself in practice, he settled in Dublin in the year 1809, and rose step by step from an income at the rate of three guineas for six months, till he was in receipt of £5000 *per annum*, on an average of ten years. When failing health forced him to withdraw from practice, he had received in fees for four months no less a sum than £2,230.

But while thus rising to a high point in his profession, Dr. Cheyne was not oblivious of the soul. To a friend he once wrote: "You may wish to know the condition of my mind. I am humbled to the dust by the thought that there is not one action of my busy life which will bear the eye of a holy God. But when I reflect on the invitation of the Redeemer, 'Come unto Me,' and that I have accepted this invitation; and, moreover, that my conscience testifies that I earnestly desire to have my will in all things conformed to the will of God, I have peace, I have the promised rest—promised by Him in whom was found no guile."

Moreover, Dr. Cheyne, with the calmness which only the truth as it is in Jesus, and good hope through him, can inspire, gave directions for his own funeral, in a spirit which evinces the great firmness of his faith. In the act of triumphing over death, he ordered a column to be erected near the spot where his body lies, on which were to be inscribed these texts, as voices from eternity: "God so loved

the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have eternal life ;” “ Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ;” and, “ Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” And while Dr. Cheyne thus strove even from the tomb to beckon sinners to the Saviour and to glory, he was careful to conceal his own name, and withhold it from the column. He was not less careful, however, to say, as speaking to the passer-by, “ The name, profession, and age of him whose body lies beneath are of little consequence ; but it may be of great importance to you to know, that, by the grace of God, he was brought to look to the Lord Jesus as the only Saviour of sinners, and that this ‘ looking unto Jesus ’ gave peace to his soul.” Nor was this all ; the appeal is yet more cogent to the reader. “ Pray to God,” it says, “ pray to God that you may be instructed in the Gospel ; and be assured that God will give the Holy Spirit, the only teacher of true wisdom, to them that ask him.”

There, then, is the case of one physician whom no materialism could harden, and no familiarity with death blind to the glories of life and its Lord. He was careful to roll back every reproach from the pure truth of God ; and whether that reproach originated with the superficial and the prejudiced in his own profession, or the ignorant in other spheres. his fine mental powers, his love of souls, his felt

interest in the things of eternity and the favour of God, evermore urged Dr. Cheyne to act like one who knew the grace of God in truth.

Now, what has been may be—what has been in such a cause, *ought* to be; and were men not too often the willing victims of the evil heart of unbelief, we should find more of the guardians of our health walking in the steps of Luke, the beloved physician, than is now the case. A godless physician beside a dying man's couch must exercise a torpedo-like influence on the soul, deadening or disturbing all that is heavenly. On the other hand, the man who can wisely and tenderly prescribe for the soul, or at least point to its great Physician, while caring for the aching or the wasted body, is a brother born for adversity indeed. Countless as are the opportunities which that wise and Christian physician may enjoy for warning the careless, for cheering the despairing, or pointing the dying to the Life, he is not the friend, but the heartless enemy of man, who neglects to embrace them, and tell of Him who is both our righteousness and our strength. If no words of reprobation be too strong for him who sees a fellow-creature writhing in agony without assisting him when he has the power, what shall we say of the unfeeling, the inhuman being, who lets a fellow-sinner perish in his guilt for ever, unheeded and unwarned?

One sentence more. Various solutions have been attempted for the phenomenon which has long been

common—the ungodliness or the gross lives of many physicians. Without challenging any of the explanations which have been offered, there can be no doubt that that phenomenon has a moral cause. Men neglect the most solemn warnings. While tending the sick and the dying, they see sin and its effects linked together in bonds which cannot be broken; and yet they continue in sin themselves. Unchecked by what *should* check, passion carries them forward in their downward career, and the coarseness of the lives of some physicians appears a righteous retribution for warnings slighted—for lessons not learned—for God not heard—and the divinely-appointed connection between sin and misery not recognised. Where, on earth, can a scene so appropriate for religion as a dying man's chamber be found? And shall the physician leave it without blame, if he not merely drop no hint of the glory which awaits the ransomed, the woe of the unsaved; but, moreover, proceeds to add sin to sin in his own life? The man who does so, voluntarily and sinfully comes down from the highest vantage ground on which a mortal can stand. The patient feels as if his life were in the physician's hand; a word from him would sink like an oracle into the soul, but that word is not spoken—not one hint is given, and in the high reckoning of eternity is not such a man guilty in the deepest sense?

II. Perhaps the Lawyer is exposed to yet greater spiritual peril than the physician, and his need of a

better wisdom than man's is proportionably great. The circumstances in which he is generally consulted render it specially needful that the law of God should be in his heart, and shine as the pole-star of his mind. Men resort to him, smarting under a sense of injury; and the lawyer needs prudence to repress the rising or the rankling desire for revenge. They seek his guidance when threatened by the oppressor; how discreet, then, should he be in his counsels! They may even ask his aid to accomplish some nefarious project—to overreach and defraud; or, to defend some fraud already committed. How prompt, then, should lawyers be to repress such iniquity, that the land may not mourn because blood touches blood! Every trial in this world's concerns—every dread of loss, of bankruptcy, or imposition, may send the client to the door of his legal adviser; and, amid all these things, if there be a man on earth who needs the control of steadfast, unfaltering truth—a counsellor who is ever near—a wisdom which cannot err—a charity which “seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things”—the lawyer is that man.

And yet there is much in his position to bias or to pervert his judgments. Accustomed, at least in some departments of his profession, to various sinister influences, and often more bent on discovering what can be said for a cause than what is true, the mind

may be so warped as to lose the power of dispassionate decision. It may acquire such a habit of tampering with the truthful, or be so much more anxious to carry a point than to establish a fact, that a kind of subtle Jesuitism may be the result—a habit of perplexing all that is simple, or shrouding in mystery all that is plain.

Moreover, an advocate, while he pleads for the life or the liberty of a client, may not merely feel himself free, but bound, to use every means, to accomplish his object, even though some of them may be tortuous or equivocal. Nay, it may become a point of honour to conceal or perplex the true, and attempt to establish the false. In this manner, the endeavour to keep as near to falsehood as a regard to character, or rather to success, will allow, may foster a habit of mind subversive of all that is lofty or pure in truth. And where shall we find an antidote to that but in the truth which came from heaven—where but in the authority of Him who is the Lord of conscience—where but in the Judge of all, whose law written on the heart, though only partially legible now, taught even a heathen to say, "*Fiat Justitia, ruat cælum?*"

The baneful effects of this moral peril are recognised, in common language, by the discredit always thrown upon a Special Pleader, now almost a synonyme for meanness, chicanery, and deception. There are, no doubt, many who are above the baseness of fraud, and the dishonesty of a conscious attempt to deceive; but it may fairly be questioned whether it

be common to find men, in certain departments of the legal profession, so thoroughly elevated above temptation as not to be exposed to moral peril. Nay, we speak too guardedly on this subject—others have spoken out. "There are many," an eminent lawyer has said, "whom it may be needful to remind, that an advocate, by the sacred duty of his connection with his client, knows, in the discharge of that office, but one person in the world—that client, and none other. To serve that client, by all expedient means; to protect that client, at all hazards and costs to all others (even the party already injured), and, amongst others, to himself, is the highest and most unquestioned of his duties. And he must not regard the alarm, the suffering, the torment, the destruction, which he may bring upon any other. Nay, separating even the duties of a patriot from those of an advocate, he must go on, reckless of the consequences, if his fate should unhappily be to involve his country in confusion for his client." *

Now, this is plain, but it is also perilous. The expedient is here allowed to supersede not merely the patriotic, but also the truthful. If the object aimed at, which may be to screen successful villany, or shelter even a murderer from punishment, can be accomplished—all is reckoned fair. Truth may be compromised; honest witnesses browbeaten or bewildered; and the beautiful transparency of one upright

* See this quotation from the "The Licence of Counsel," in Whately's *Rhetoric*. Part II., chap. iii.

man's intercourse with another turned into mockery, or treated with derision. Lawyers not a few have proved, by their offences against truth and the sacred obligations of man to man, that it is only too congenial to their liking thus to trample truth in the dust. They feign "pity, indignation, moral approbation, or disgust or contempt, when they neither feel anything of the kind, nor believe the case to be one that justly calls for such feelings; they are led also occasionally to entrap or mislead, to revile, insult, and calumniate persons whom they may, in their heart, believe to be respectable persons and honest witnesses," and such putting of bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter, must involve a woe. It cannot fail to warp the conscience and becloud the mind; and the man who does not feel the danger of such ways, is already their dupe or their victim. One has pertinently asked the learned and the noble who patronize these outrages against truth, while yet they profess to be Christians, how they can reconcile the two. There is a religion which says that 'lying lips are an abomination to the Lord;' and how can men, it is asked, avoid the solemn scriptural denunciation, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter; . . . who justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him."*

* See Archbishop Whately's *Rhetoric*. Part II., chap. iii.

Perhaps the most remarkable illustration of the injurious effects of such habits upon the heart and mind is found in the case of Lord Chancellor Bacon—

“The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind.”

This is not the place to tell of his learning, his world-wide fame, his greatness as a philosopher who revolutionized science, and certainly introduced a new era in the history of man. His eloquence as a pleader, and the stately majesty of his thinking, place Bacon high among “the starry lights of genius.” He is in philosophy what Shakespeare or Milton is among poets.

And yet, that man so gifted and transcendent, was guilty of actions which equal in turpitude aught that is recorded in the history of human weakness. Whether we are to ascribe it to the discipline of his profession, fostering some inborn tendencies to what is disreputable and degrading, we do not tarry to inquire; but looking at the fact which history renders too unquestionable, we have in this illustrious philosopher but unscrupulous man, a painful exhibition of man’s native weakness when the heavenly lamp is shaded or extinguished. Some have explained the low morality of Bacon by supposing that he was an infidel, and some of his reputed works rather favour the supposition.* But his productions as a whole forbid us to adopt that solution, and we are consequently left with an example of a most painful kind, to prove the worthlessness of powers the most colossal,

* See Campbell’s *Lives of the Chancellors*, vol. ii pp. 429, 430.

of learning and originality unsurpassed, of gifts the most varied and transcendent to keep man in the path of virtue, when the heavenly guide is abandoned. We can only enumerate in a catalogue some of the incidents in the life of Bacon which establish these conclusions.

At a critical period, he received from the Earl of Essex, when that nobleman was in favour with Queen Elizabeth, a gift of land which was worth at least £1800. Yet against his benefactor, Bacon afterwards enlisted his great powers, to convict him of high-treason; and that merely to purchase the Queen's favour, and promote the philosopher's advancement. “Bacon spent the ten days which elapsed between the commitment of Essex to the Tower and his arraignment, shut up in his chambers in Gray's Inn, studying the law of treason; looking out for parallel cases of an aggravated nature in the history of other countries, and considering how he might paint the unpardonable guilt of the accused in even blacker colours than could be employed by the ferocious Coke, famous for insulting his victims.”* The man whom Bacon thus laboured to condemn had heaped favour after favour upon him, and been meanly fawned upon in return, yet during the trial, Lord Campbell says, Bacon “most artfully and inhumanly compared Essex to the Duke of Guise,” and adds, in regard to the Earl after he was condemned, and an interview which Bacon

* Campbell, vol. ii. p. 307.

had with the Queen upon the subject, "Why did he not throw himself on his knees before her and pray for a pardon? Because, while it was possible that he might have melted her, it was possible that he might have offended her, and that, a vacancy in the office of Solicitor-General occurring, (for which Bacon was a suitor) he might be again passed over."

But not contented with having pled for the condemnation of Essex, Bacon, in order to ingratiate himself farther with the Queen, published an attack upon the fallen man, regarding which the great philosopher's biographer says: "No honorable man would purchase Bacon's subsequent elevation at the price of being the author of this publication. . . . The base ingratitude and the slavish meanness manifested by him on this occasion, called forth the general indignation of his contemporaries. . . . He had before his eyes no just standard of honour, and in the race of ambition, he had lost all sense of the distinctions between right and wrong."

It were a weariness to trace all the instances of Bacon's meanness in place-hunting, and his fulsome adulation of those who appeared likely to promote his views. He even went so far as to prosecute a clergyman named Peacham, for a sermon alleged to contain treason, but never either preached or published. Bacon was then Attorney-General. He tampered with the judges, says Lord Campbell, and had the unhappy man put to the torture, to wring a confession from him, without success. "He was examined

before torture, between torture, and after torture."—These are Bacon's own words, and according to the biographer of the Chancellors, there is reason to believe that he even presided at the rack. He thus outraged the law and the constitution of England to gratify James I., then upon the throne. But the Lord Chancellor of the day was aged and infirm. Lord Campbell says, "he could not much longer hold the seals, and Bacon was resolved to be his successor." That was his aim, and is not Lord Campbell right in adding, "there are stronger contrasts of light and shade in the character of Bacon, than probably of any other man who ever lived?" The instances of meanness, of subserviency, of adulation to those from whom he expected favours, as proved by his own letters, convict this philosopher and sage of conduct which would have degraded a menial; while to the whole he could add a malignity never surpassed, all under pretence of acting a Christian part. His biographer says that he poured oil of vitriol into the wounds he had inflicted, and it was in perfect keeping with this that that Attorney-General of England, in consequence of some offence which he had unwarily given, flung himself on the floor, kissed the feet of such a man as Buckingham, the profligate favourite of James, and vowed never to rise till he was forgiven.

But he could not always proceed unchecked. Nemesis was not forgetful of the right. Bacon had reached the summit of his ambition; he was Lord High

Chancellor of England, and in that character soon became notorious for the bribes which he accepted for his judgments. This more than European philosopher, this author of a new logic, and of works which brought the learned from all parts of Christendom to converse with him, was known to take bribes as a judge! A committee of the House of Commons was appointed to investigate such corruption. The Chancellor shuffled, equivocated, denied, but at last confessed, because the evidence was such as no partiality could escape. A great number of charges of bribery were established. The whole have been supposed to amount to £100,000. Bacon was about to be impeached. He broke down under the load of infamy, and appealed to the King to interpose; but all was unavailing, and the Lord High Chancellor of England, one of the profoundest thinkers of modern times, gave in to his peers, "His confession and humble submission." It says, "I do plainly and ingenuously confess that I am guilty of corruption; and do renounce all defence and put myself upon the grace and mercy of your Lordships." When visited at his house, where he lay in shattered health, to ascertain the genuineness of his signature to the confession, he exclaimed, "My lords, it is my act, my hand, my heart. I beseech your Lordships to be merciful to a broken reed;" and he subsequently surrendered the great seal, the bauble for which, Macaulay says, he had sullied his integrity, had resigned his independence, had violated the most

sacred obligations of friendship and gratitude, had flattered the worthless, had persecuted the innocent, had tampered with judges, had tortured prisoners, and had wasted on paltry intrigues all the powers of the most exquisitely constructed intellect that has ever been bestowed on any of the children of men.

Bacon's sentence from his peers was, a fine of £40,000; he was to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure; to be for ever incapable of holding any public office, place, or employment, and never to sit in Parliament, or come within the verge of the court. The king was eventually moved to rescind the judgment, but Bacon was then too old to profit by the clemency—he was on the eve of passing away to meet the just and merciful Judge of the skies.

Now, this glimpse at the rise and fall of this great lawyer, proclaims aloud the insufficiency of all but the grace and truth of God to keep man morally erect. Not gigantic intellectual powers—had these sufficed, Bacon would have been steadfast as a rock. Not worldly success—Bacon sat at the right hand of royalty, and kept the conscience of a king. Not great trust—the Lord High Chancellor of England was the foremost subject in that respect. Not celebrity—with that, Bacon might have been satiated. Not greatness—without goodness, that is a tinkling cymbal. What then? The answer which experience, history, and the Word of God combine to give, is this, “I am what I am by the grace of God

that is in me." The man who dims the light of that lamp which was kindled in heaven, has already tottered to his fall.

But truth would have "fallen in the streets," had all lawyers acted thus. There have been some, however, who repelled such things with high-toned integrity and honour, and we now turn to a contrast to Lord Chancellor Bacon—to one

"In whom
The British Themis gloried with just cause."

Sir Matthew Hale was one of those upright men whom all the good delight to honour. With his conscience quickened by habitual contact with the Word of God, and his whole soul familiar with the heavenly standard, he repudiated all that was disreputable in his profession. Pure religion presided over his practice; and while honouring God, he was honoured by him. As soon as Hale was convinced of the injustice of any cause, he immediately declined to advocate it, and utterly refused to plead against the truth. He at least frowned upon all that was false and unfair. As a judge, he repressed every attempt to ensnare or mislead a witness. He felt that, when such things are done under the very shadow of the judge's bench, where the great ends of truth and justice should be inviolably promoted, gross guilt may be expected to reign in other spheres. He, therefore, shunned as a sin all that savoured of finesse; and, braced for duty by the truth of God, no influence, no entreaty, not even a

monarch's smile, could induce him to swerve from the path in which a good man ought to go. In short, his pleadings as an advocate were characterized by the same integrity, and the same Christian consistency as the other actions of his life. Indeed, to act otherwise, or to be one thing as a lawyer and another as a man, is one of the numerous conventional snares laid for conscience which tend to meanness as surely as they encourage immorality. It seems a truism, "It is as great a dishonour as can be inflicted, for man to say otherwise than he knows to be true, for the love of a little money;" and yet what crowds are thus degraded!

Need we add, religion repudiates all these fetches? Common as it may be to sacrifice conscience for gain or for professional success, the man who has sat down at the Saviour's feet, and is taught by the Saviour's Spirit, will be ready with the cry: "Into their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united."

Side by side with Sir Matthew Hale we may place Sir William Jones, who was as eminent for personal religion as he was for his profound acquaintance with the Oriental and other tongues. Lawyer as he was, his was a mind of decided godliness, and a life of much consistency. The atonement of the Saviour was the anchor of his hope, and the Word of God a light to his feet and a lamp to his path. He said of it: "I have carefully and regularly perused the Holy Scriptures, and am of opinion that the volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more sublimity,

purser morality, more important history, and finer strains of eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever other languages they may have been written." Now, that is much—but not too much—from one who had mastered eight-and-twenty languages, and was familiar with the riches of them all. It stands in instructive contrast with the flippant ungodliness of those who never devoted one earnest hour, or poured forth one earnest petition, to know the mystery which was hid for ages, but which is opened up in the revelation of Jesus. It shows that there is nothing essentially or necessarily godless in a lawyer's profession; and it leaves the unprincipled men who sell their very consciences for gold, without excuse, amid their systematic violations of honour, of integrity, and truth.

III. It may appear strange to occupy a sentence in saying that Ministers of Religion should be Christian men; and yet the dark history of the past makes it necessary to say it. Nay, so necessary is it, that Luther made no over-statement, when he averred that religion is never in such danger as among reverend men. Habituated, as they are, to handle divine things, they are scarcely less habitually in danger of doing so deceitfully. To be called upon professionally to engage in sacred duties at all times and in all states of mind—to be constantly contemplating truth in some of its countless forms for professional uses, without applying it to the heart, and life,

and practice of the person contemplating it—to expatiate upon the glories of redemption and the Redeemer, topics on which the most phlegmatic heart may glow, without taking any personal interest in them at all;—these, and countless other dangers, beset the ministers of religion; these account for their frequent falls, and the disgrace which is thereby brought upon the holy name they bear. To urge conversion while we are not converted—to commend the love of Christ when we do not feel it—to preach repentance which we do not practise, and faith which we do not hold—to tell of a Saviour whom we know only by rumour—of a Spirit whom we habitually grieve—of a heaven to which we are not going, and an immortality which is to be only one of woe to us;—to what can all that lead but self-deception of the direst kind—to searedness of conscience—to hearts hardened, and salvation rendered hopeless? Of all dangers, those of an irreligious minister must rank among the greatest. We do not limit the grace of God; but he who has learned to preach about a Redeemer whose power *he* never felt, about a Prophet who does not teach *him*, about a Priest who does not atone for *him*, about a King who does not rule *him*, seems not far from destruction. At the same time, constant exposure to that danger lessens the sense of it; and consciences which were uneasy at first, gradually settle quietly down, like a ship which has foundered at sea—and all is peaceful, because all is death.

Moreover, ministers of religion are not usually exhorted, warned, or unmasked, as other men are; and hence their dangers are enhanced. Professional devotion is apt to be all that they have; and they may thus pass through life with a lie in their right hand. They can at last tamper with truth without compunction or alarm; and the most solemn functions have often furnished materials only for mirth.

But it is far from our object to do more than refer to this subject. Let us only observe how insufficient mere professional punctilio is to keep the heart of man, how easily all the withes of formality are snapped when temptation assails. Religion has little to fear from the open enemy; it is the pretended friend, the professed defender, but real assailant, who weakens it.

Yet while we do not dwell on the duties of the ministry, we cannot omit the opportunity which a reference to the sacred office affords for showing the necessity of enthroning the Word of God in the heart of man; and for having every thought, and word, and deed, subject to its control. It has been often said that without the Bible, London or New York would soon become what Paris, Vienna, Rome, and Naples are. In as far as the Bible is neglected in the protestant cities, the saying is fast hastening to its fulfilment; and the clerical profession supplies too many instances by which the remark may be farther verified.

It might be supposed, then, that fenced round as

minister's of religion are by professional barriers, kept as they are, or should be, in daily contact with the truth of God, and the things of eternity, all would be pure, and lovely, and of good report. But example after example can be quoted to show how far it is often the reverse, and the case of the Rev. Dr. Dodd will amply illustrate the remark. He was a prebendary of Brecon, and chaplain in ordinary to George III. As a preacher he was celebrated and popular; he was often called on to plead the cause of the London charities, and took an active part in promoting their interests. He published a commentary on the Scriptures, which Dr. Adam Clark, no incompetent judge, pronounced "the best in the English language." To that work he added various others, chiefly of a devotional kind, some of which still hold a prominent place among productions of their class. But neither the mental powers which produced these works, nor the eloquence which he displayed, nor the spirit of devotion which appeared to some to breathe through his volumes, nor his rank as a royal chaplain, nor the claims and regards of those who were dependent on him, nor his high position in society, could restrain Dr. Dodd within the narrow way. He contracted expensive habits of living, occasioned, it is said, by licentiousness of manners. Dr. Johnson, his earnest and indefatigable friend, says, "His moral character was very bad;" and in an evil hour, Dodd forged a bond for £4,200, upon his former pupil, the Earl of Chesterfield.

The fallen man, no doubt, hoped that he would be able to meet the demand when that transaction reached the stage which made that necessary, so as neither to expose himself, nor really defraud his former pupil. Dodd was unable, however, to meet the emergency, for difficulties were increased, not diminished, by such a step. The forgery was detected; the Earl of Chesterfield would not interfere; the law took hold of the culprit, and the sad spectacle was presented to the nation of one who had formerly stood so high, dying a criminal's death. The man who had commented on the Word of God, forgot to apply it to the regulation of his own life. Extravagance, licentiousness, and fraud, were the stages by which he descended from his elevation. He began by slight degrees to overstep the restraints of the Word of God; and when he had once succeeded in setting it aside, the descent was rapid, the ruin utter. He who attempted to deceive his fellow-men, and for a time succeeded, had first deceived himself; but his sin found him out, and on the 27th of June 1777, the Commentator on the Bible, the author of several devotional works, died at Tyburn by the hands of the public executioner. The jury who tried him recommended him to the royal clemency. The city of London petitioned the crown in his favour; and another petition prepared by Dr. Johnson, and signed by three-and-twenty thousand, was also presented. But all was unavailing; the adviser of the crown would not recommend even a respite, and though Dr.

Dodd cherished the hope of pardon till the last, there never was a foundation for the hope. Justice took its inexorable course.

The view which many took of this culprit's case, may be represented by a letter from Boswell to Dr. Johnson. He says—"I own I am very desirous that the royal prerogative of remission of punishment should be employed to exhibit an illustrious instance of the regard which God's vicègerent will ever show to piety and virtue. If for ten righteous men, the Almighty would have spared Sodom, shall not a thousand acts of goodness done by Dr. Dodd counterbalance one crime? Such an instance would do more to encourage goodness than his execution would do to deter from vice." But neither this nor the speeches, the petitions, nay, not even the letters which Dr. Johnson wrote for Dr. Dodd to royalty itself, availed, and just before passing to execution he confessed that "his life for some few unhappy years past had been dreadfully erroneous." In one of his letters to the king, the fallen man, in language which Dr. Johnson had prepared, "confessed his crime, and owned both the enormity of its consequences and the danger of its example." He, at the same time, said, "I have not the confidence to petition for impunity, but humbly hope that public security may be established without the spectacle of a clergyman dragged through the streets to a death of infamy, amidst the derision of the profligate and profane; and that justice may be satisfied with irrevocable exile, perpetual disgrace, and

hopeless penury." Every effort, however, was fruitless. Large sums of money were ready to bribe the turnkey to connive at an escape. A figure in wax, representing Dr. Dodd, was said to have been conveyed into the prison to aid the same object, but neither did that succeed; and, according to Dr. Johnson, he died on the scaffold "with pious composure and resolution."

It was, indeed, a spectacle which might have touched the hearts of thousands, did aught but Omnipotent grace possess that power, to see a minister of religion conducted to Tyburn in such circumstances as we have described. We may deem the law severe, or think that the life of Dr. Dodd should have been spared; but his melancholy lot is not the less instructive. His whole history tells how feeble are human barriers against human guilt.

And the consequences of this crime did not terminate with Dr. Dodd himself. He had married a Miss Perkins of Durham, but, left in sorrow, poverty, and disgrace, by her husband, reason forsook her, and she died a wretched maniac at Ilford in Essex. Is it not true that unthinking men, in pursuit of the wages of sin, scatter firebrands, and arrows, and death, though they say, Am not I in sport?

Here, then, is a case which thoroughly exhibits the necessity of enthroning the Bible in the heart, and keeping it enthroned. There is some reason to fear that the minister whom Dr. Johnson describes as having "lived a life of great voluptuousness," had

never felt the power of the truth, even before he fell into the habits which ended in his ruin. But, however that may be, it is manifest that after Dr. Dodd had entered on his downward career, the truth was discarded, and the deceitful heart consulted—not the Wonderful, the Counsellor. The truth could have kept him steadfast. It could have taught him to dash temptation from him, as Paul shook off the viper from his hand into the flames at Melita. But Dodd forgot the Bible, he tampered with temptation, and he fell. We say nothing of the extravagance which the need of so large a sum as £4,200 on the part of a clergyman betokens. We only glance at what was most probably his purpose, to pay the sum for which he had forged, before it became due. These and other things might be pled in palliation, but looking simply at the act, who does not see that neither professional punctilio, nor external barriers, nor a thousand earthly bonds can prevent man from sinning, when the lamp to our path is extinguished—the Word of God set aside even in a single transaction?

Further: Dr. Dodd is known to have continued his professional employments after his felonious transaction. Conscious as he must have been of what he had done with his own right hand, he yet continued to lead the devotions of his flock, and act as if no crime had been committed. We do not refer to the feelings of a minister of Christ amid such things; but we do say that the whole transaction proc' aims,

in a way the most solemn and the most cogent, that no secondary restraints will keep man from iniquity ; they are all like sand before the torrent, or flax before the flame. The Bible, and the Bible alone, laid up in the heart, and blessed by the Spirit there, can either make man right, or keep him so. In a word, this example tells aloud that every human influence, every earthly appliance, is weak against the heart of man, unless the truth of God control it. Conscience will be warped. Reputation will be risked. Professional standing will be presumed upon. Life will be hazarded. The hearts of those whom we love will be broken ; and only when the Word of God is permitted to rule the soul, is the heart kept as the fountain of the issues of life. Men regard such cases as that of Dr. Dodd as doing injury to religion, and the infidel hails them as a disproof. They are in truth confirmations of it, and prove that only that truth admitted into the heart, enthroned and maintained in the conscience as it demands to be, can rescue man from self-degradation and moral death. Dr. Dodd fell because the Bible was not his guide. He deserted religion and was ruined.

Another example points in the same direction, and may deepen the impression of that of Dr. Dodd. At a recent period, a preacher of great popularity gathered crowds around him in London ; thousands heard the truth at his lips ; and he filled a large place in the public eye. Accomplished as a scholar, eloquent as a preacher, and graceful as a man, he wielded

no limited power within a considerable sphere. To his influence as a minister of religion he added that of an author; and what he published was read by thousands. Not a little originality of thought, and vigorous powers rendered him, in short, an able advocate of the truth.

Here, then, is another man who seems to be fenced off from the world by much that should have been constraining; but in this case also, we may see how futile every subordinate influence proves against the wayward heart of man.

The divine referred to, elated perhaps by his success, began to frequent the haunts of wit, and to associate with the literary, merely as literary men. He laid aside, or he merged for the time, those truths of God which alone can elevate, and went down to the level of those who think they can find something to make them blessed apart from the truth, and the favour of their God. From the excitement of wit there is scarcely a transition to the excitement of wine, and that followed next. By a gradual descent, that man, at one time so ascendant, became a felon in his own eyes; he fled from the pulpit which he had begun to desecrate, and sought an asylum in Paris, where theatres—saloons of fashion—

“The midnight revel and the public show,”

became his haunts. For years his friends could find no trace of him; and when he was discovered, it was as one who lived by gambling—a degraded, wretched

outcast. While he lived in that self-outlawed condition, a friend who had learned the truth from the fallen man's lips, actually resorted to a *hell*, to make sure of the sad change which had come over his former teacher, and to his horror he found what he sought. He saw that minister of Christ taking part in the orgies of a Parisian pandemonium, and hastened with an aching heart, from that last retreat of the infatuated. That victim of his own heart was at length taken ill at Bordeaux; a surgical operation was declared to be necessary, and to escape from the pain, he blew out his brains with a pistol.

Need anything be said to enforce the moral of such a case? Everything but the Word of God controlling the heart is feeble against passion, as a spider's web against a storm. Everything else is fleeting as the sand of the desert, or veering as the mimic figures which tell the changes of the wind. The Word of the Lord alone endureth for ever, both in itself and its moral ascendancy.

Nor is it only in insulated cases, among ministers of religion, that such mournful truths are pressed upon our attention. In times of religious declension, such sad demonstrations of the insufficiency of all but grace and truth to tame the passions of men, may be seen almost upon a national scale. There is a man, for example, whom the grace of God has arrested amid a life of waywardness and guilt, and rendered a signal monument of mercy. In terms of his own confession, there was scarcely a *sin* which

he had not committed, and as a fiery duellist, he was, in the eyes of God, a murderer. But the truth was at last felt in the conscience, and that man once so bold in iniquity, sought the society of those from whom he expected help on his way; with what result his biographer shall tell: "Other proofs," we read, "of the degraded state of the dominant party in the Church (of Scotland) might be mentioned, particularly a Presbytery dinner to which Mr. James Haldane was invited in Edinburgh, upon a special occasion, and to which he had gone, hoping for useful, perhaps spiritual, or at least rational conversation, on the topics in which he was now chiefly interested. Instead of this, the company were treated to bacchanalian songs, the folly of which was aggravated into something approaching to wickedness, by an admixture of ridiculous, if not profane allusions to their own sacred calling and functions. The burden of one song was the prescription of "a bumper of Nottingham Ale" in the pulpit, at the different stages of a Presbyterian discourse. If, in the hey-day of youth and folly, while God was not in all his thoughts, he had been disposed to turn away from the convivial excesses of his associates at sea, how was he likely now to appreciate such approaches to the same intemperance, in connection with eternal realities, amongst the professed heralds of the Cross, whose duty it was to warn men "to flee from the wrath to come?"

* Memoirs of the Lives of Robert Haldane, and James A. Haldane, p. 132

Painful and profoundly instructive as the incident now mentioned is, we have yet more humbling evidence of the danger to which men are exposed by their familiarity with sacred things. In the autobiography of the Rev. Dr. Hamilton of Strathblane, we read, "Many of the ministers of Scotland were genuine Socinians. Many of them were ignorant of theology as a system, and utterly careless about the merits of any creed or confession. They seemed miserable in the discharge of every ministerial duty When they preached, their sermons generally turned on honesty, good neighbourhood, and kindness. To deliver a gospel sermon, or preach to the hearts and consciences of dying sinners, was as completely beyond their power, as to speak in the language of angels. And while their discourses were destitute of everything which a dying sinner needs, they were at the same time the most feeble, empty, and insipid things that ever disgraced the venerated name of sermons They had no more religion in private than in public. They were loud and obstreperous in declaiming against enthusiasm and fanaticism, faith and religious zeal But though frightfully impatient of everything which bore the semblance of seriousness and sober reflection, the elevation of brow, the expansion of feature, the glistening of the eye, the fluency and warmth of speech at convivial parties, showed that their heart and soul were there; and that the pleasures of the table, and the hilarity of the light-hearted and the

gay constituted their paradise, and furnished them with the perfection of their joy."*

It is thus that men are degraded by the perversion of what was meant to ennoble. It is thus that of all the piteous spectacles which our world presents, few are more sad or distressing than that of a godless minister of religion; such a man

" Is branded to the last,
What atheists call him—a designing knave,
A mere church juggler, hypocrite, and slave.

* * * * *

The sacred function in his hands is made,
Sad sacrilege! no function but a trade."

—When the standard-bearer falls, who will fight?
When the Cross is torn down by those who should
point to it, who will believe?

And such is the process by which God, in his providence, often makes it plain that his own revealed truth alone can either reclaim man from guilt, or keep him steadfast in the path to glory. We, indeed, are prone to suppose that there is nothing fixed in that Word, that, like the chameleon, it takes on the hue of every mind that studies it. But the Holy One, on the other hand, demonstrates that his Word is the only fixed thing which our world knows. Like himself it is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; it either makes man right and keeps him so, or it detects and unmask him as hopelessly incorrigible and clean gone in guilt. It tells of the anchor for the soul both sure and stedfast; and when man

* See Lives of the Haldanes, pp. 128, 129.

drifts away from that mooring, whatever be his position, he is rushing fast to ruin.

Every view of truth, then, calls upon man, whatever be his sphere, to make sure that it is planted in his heart by the power of the Spirit of God. Without that, the physician may degenerate into an atheist or a materialist, whose hopes terminate at the edge of the grave. Without the presiding power of truth in the soul, the lawyer, nay, the very judge, may become a corrupter of public morals, as multitudes have done—a patron of the false and the degrading. Without truth enthroned in the heart, and a thorough transition from darkness to light, even ministers of religion are only blind leaders of the blind; they are clouds without water, carried about of winds; they are trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots. And all these things press upon men the necessity of enthroning truth. Time asks it: eternity asks it: patriotism asks it: pure religion asks it; and he is willing to throw poison into our wells who resists such multifarious appeals.

But it would not be difficult to show, at greater length than we have tarried to do, that in every sphere there have been men who feared God, and beld forth a testimony for his truth, often amid open profanity or the oblivion of all that is sacred. Like Cornelius of old, devout men have adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour alike in the Army and the Navy. Among the accomplished devotees of

Science, all do not forget God in the investigation of those laws by which He rules the world, or of those wonders which embody his wisdom and his power. Among those who cultivate the Arts, there have been many who, like the sculptor Bacon, might have caused it to be written on their tomb: "What I was as an artist, seemed to me of some importance while I lived; but what I really was as a believer in Christ Jesus, is the only thing of importance to me now." In every sphere, we repeat, God has had his witnesses, testifying to the power of his grace, it may be in sackcloth, as regards men, but yet in the sunshine of God's favour. And who shall tell what unthinking men forego, by neglecting to do as these believers did—to make the religion of Jesus their guide, and Jesus himself their Alpha and their Omega! He is the rock that is higher than we. He is a sun and shield. He is life to the dead, and wisdom to the unwise. It is by His might that we conquer, and by His righteousness that we are saved. It is by His spirit that we are sanctified—and are they the wise who ignore all this?

Amid such meditations as these, it is one of the deepest lessons which meet us in the history of man, that there is room in his heart for every god but the true One. From the sun in the firmament down to the meanest reptile that crawls, all have been adored. The foulest human passions have been exalted to the rank of divinities, and worshipped in gorgeous temples with costly parade. Even after God has

dwelt on earth as "God with us," we find men in millions clinging to every god but Him—not merely the dead, but fragments of their bones, are adored, as possessing power to bless. Now, were the lamp of life admitted into the heart, it would instantly dispel such debasing delusions from minds of every class. It would guide man away from the rank to which sin degrades him, to that for which the gospel is designed to fit us; and the peace of God which passes all understanding is the portion of those who have thus hailed the truth of God and discarded the lies of men; who have welcomed the religion of Jesus to the soul, and dismissed the religion of nature as a blind guide, the religion of Rome as a dark, debasing superstition, the religion of unconverted men as *fit* only to lead us more assuredly to woe.

CHAPTER VII.

RELIGION IN OUR SOCIAL INTERCOURSE.

WHEN the Word of God has obtained its true place in any man's heart, it disposes at once of a hundred questions which were difficult or perplexing before. On the one hand, when we have the divine standard of right and wrong set up, it becomes immediately apparent that one class of actions are right, are just, are necessary, on the part of all who would make God's will their rule. On the other hand, it becomes no less apparent that another class of actions are distinctly prohibited. No man who believes the Word of God to be his word can do these things.

But between these two, or the decidedly right and the decidedly wrong, there are some actions whose moral character it is not so easy to adjust. They are not so exactly described in the Word of God. They lie on the debateable territory between the right and the wrong. They may partake of the one character or the other, according to the circumstances in which they are performed. They may be right, for example, for me in sickness, but wrong for me in health; or the reverse.

Now, it is generally among these undecided cases that a man's principles are exposed to the greatest strain. No one who professes to respect the Word

of God can refuse to do what is decidedly right, and as little can he refuse to shun the decidedly forbidden. If he do not shun it, he is detected as offering to the Bible only the mockery of respect—to its God only the semblance of homage. He has extinguished the lamp of life, and deliberately walks in darkness.

In regard, for example, to the Sabbath law, certain things are distinctly commanded, and other things are as distinctly forbidden. There can be no doubt in any mind which has bowed to the supremacy of God, or recognised his right of property in us and ours, that he claims a seventh part of our time as his own, to be employed in his service and in preparing for his abode for ever. Our blessedness here and hereafter is thus involved in that law; and all objections to spend the Sabbath with God, are suggested by ignorance of what is at once our chief good and our chief end—God.

But it is equally certain that works of necessity and mercy are not prohibited; and it is regarding *these* that a man's principles are put to the most decisive test. It is not possible to lay down any rule applicable to every case, for what is necessity at one time may be no necessity at another; or what is mercy in one case—for instance, to the aged and the feeble—may be indolence and sloth in others. Between the unvarying right, then, and the unvarying wrong, lies the territory where men are tried as moral agents. Will they use their liberty, or will they abuse it?

Will they grasp at feigned reasons for violating the Sabbath law? Will they be guided by the necessity which God creates, or will they fabricate pleas and pretences for themselves, under cover of which the law of God may be broken, and the consciences of men entangled or defiled?

Now, our ordinary Social intercourse belongs to the class for which it is difficult or impossible to lay down rules which are applicable to all occasions. It is a divine maxim from which we cannot swerve, that our "speech should be always with grace, seasoned with salt." Whatever is offensive or unholy should not be once named among us; but still it is difficult to lay down any rules which apply to every case. On the one hand, there are men with whom intercourse the most cordial may be cherished, nay, earnestly coveted. Where "they that fear the Lord speak often one to another, while the Lord hearkens and hears," the man of God may expect to find what will gladden his soul. "The excellent of the earth" can impart blessings of the highest order, for the law of the Lord is on their lips. But, on the other hand, there are the profane, the godless, who walk through the world trampling on the laws of the Eternal, and with these we can hold no willing intercourse, unless we would catch their spirit, and at last share their doom—"The companion of fools shall be destroyed." But between these two classes there are various shades of character; and it is in reference to *these* that our difficulties in life actually occur.

There is one passage in the Word of God* which may throw light upon this subject. A patriarch is speaking of certain cruel deeds, which he contemplates with strong emotion. Aware that man cannot be much in contact with what is immoral without being polluted, or associate with the profane without learning profanity, he thus expresses, in graphical language, the recoil of a pure or an upright mind: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united." He is referring to his own sons, but he feels that his honour would be laid in the dust were he associated with them in some of their doings; and he therefore plants a beacon over the spot of danger, to warn us away from what may end in death. He enforces the words, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." He, in substance, asserts what Paul asserted seventeen centuries thereafter, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." He takes up the language of John, and says in effect, "He that bids God-speed to an ungodly man becomes a partaker of his evil deeds;" and thus we have, at least, a general rule for universal guidance—The godly cannot *choose* the godless for their associates.

To illustrate this point, we observe: Enter some societies. Listen to the conversation which excites; notice the amusements which exhilarate—the pleasures which impart the greatest gladness. Might

* Gen. xlix. 6.

they not all exist in a world where the Son of God is unknown—where no need of him is felt, and no reference to him made? It could not be discovered from such social intercourse, that men are sinners, that they need a Saviour, or that there is one pressed on their acceptance by the God whom they have offended; nay, a single reference to these things would cast a cloud over the scene, would turn its mirth into muteness, and be regarded as an offence.

Now, wherever that is common, the earnest Christian cannot prosper; his soul must pine; it is deprived of what is to it like vital air, and plunged into an atmosphere of azote. There may be cases where duty compels some humble believer to witness such things, and at the sight his heart must be sore pained within him; but where the language of Canaan is not spoken, where the things of God are not relished, where He, the soul, and eternity do not obtain the prominence which heavenly wisdom has assigned to them, a child of God will not willingly go; he will never go of choice; duty may compel, but the feelings of the soul even in that case must be like those of the Jews by the rivers of Babylon, when they said, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land?" Children are reared—friends are entertained—sometimes the dead are buried, amid unequivocal proofs that God is forgotten; and should not a believer in Jesus "flee these things?"

Wherever we look in the wide domain of nature,

we may notice that it is an universal law—Like attracts like. We do not find a timid bird associating with its natural enemy, a bird of prey. They fight.—We do not find the gentler animals seeking to associate with the beasts of prey.—We do not see the men of high civilization associating, in common life, with the savage or the gross—there is always something monstrous or unnatural where that universal law is outraged. Such a thing is commented on as a marvel, a departure from the established order of nature. Just as the fishes of the deep have their element, and the birds of the air have theirs, there is a broad unvarying line separating the different orders of creatures in the world which God has made.

Now, to apply this to our present subject, that law reigns with more than common force in the domain of grace. Has the truth of God taken possession of any man's soul? Has the wisdom which comes from above been consulted? Is God's revealed mind placed high above the highest of all authorities? Then from that day, that man cannot repose, with the confidence of cordial friendship, upon him who turns the truth of God into a lie, or the authority of God into a name: there must be a separation, however painful it may be. Does the love of Christ constrain any heart and soul? Under that constraining power, do old things pass away, and all things become new? Then, "unto the assembly of the ungodly, mine honour, be not thou united," becomes the language of that soul. Has

any man felt that salvation must take precedence of all besides, in the mind of a rational being? Then that man cannot consent, or choose to consort, with those who are ripening their souls for an undone eternity, in spite of the warnings of their God. Has any man felt that the high concerns of an infinite futurity demand instant attention, and adjustment on the earliest possible day? Then that man can be no willing party to the wide conspiracy formed by worldly men against that futurity, and all that is momentous there. Has any man discovered that, to live only for the present hour and its pleasures, is to sink to the level of the beasts which perish? or that to be a coward before man's frown, and to have no fear of God's, is to act an impious part? Then the man who has made such a discovery will take up the language of the patriarch; he will shun the company of men who prefer what debases to what ennobles, for he clearly sees, or deeply feels, that their company is contamination.

Since these things are so, the general law in grace is established—There can be no friendship, *of choice*, between a godly and a worldly man. Their hearts, their feelings and sympathies, cannot coalesce upon the most momentous of all topics—God, eternity, and the soul; and just as water repels fire, or fire water; just as the vulture cannot and does not choose the dove for its mate, the soul of a man who loves God, who believes in the Saviour, and who would grow in holiness, is repelled and chilled by the as-

semblies where these great realities are ignored. He cannot, without self-inflicted degradation, walk in the counsel of the ungodly, or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of the scorner.

But it has already been noticed, that there is nothing strained, nothing extreme or overdone, in the Word of God. Whether it be giving a command, or issuing a prohibition, it is always wise, always considerate as to man's condition—if we may presume with such a word, it is always judicious. We are more and more struck with that fine peculiarity of the Bible the longer we study its ever-blessed pages.

Now, in connection with our Social intercourse in common life with men not godly, we have an instance of this considerate care in the Word of God. In writing to one of the churches,* Paul had occasion to lay down rules for their dealings with unholy men. He prohibits such intercourse; and in giving the prohibition, he points to some of the impious by name. After indicating their crimes—too gross to be lightly mentioned—he adds, “Yet not altogether must ye refuse to company with such men, *for then must ye needs go out of the world.*” In other words, the believer has duties to do in the world; and these he must discharge. His principles may be put to the test; his heart may be pained and vexed; what he hears and sees may distress or imperil him; but still, even amid such trials, duty, *when it is duty,*

* 1 Cor. v. 9-11.

must be done. A man is not merely not at liberty—he is forbidden, to flee from his post. He is to lean the more on God when temptation meets him in the path of duty; but he may not forsake the path. He has duties perhaps to unconverted kindred, and to those who depend on him in life. He has duties to discharge to the Church and to God, and these no man is free to forsake. On the one hand, the most lovely earthly affection is to be put aside whenever it opposes the will of God; but, on the other, we are to remember, that wherever God has placed us, He will keep us—as our day is, so our strength will be. But do we rush into danger unsent? Do we meet it while we are in pursuit of pleasure, and not in the path of duty? Then we may expect to fall; nay, we have fallen already. By tempting God, we have unnerved ourselves, and shame and confusion may be the result.

In connection with this, we observe that perhaps there never was a young convert, who, during the first days or weeks after his conversion, had not thoughts of fleeing from the post where the renewing Spirit found him. Aware of its dangers, perhaps groaning under its temptations, that young soul would flee, and seek that in change which can be found only in the unchanging One.

Now, are the engagements of that young convert really sinful? Is he violating God's law? Is he, for the sake of gold, or honour, or any selfish end, sojourning near some focus of sin? Then all that

must be abandoned ; conversion, while these things are retained, is a thing impossible.

But, on the other hand, are the lines of that young convert cast only amid trials, and not actual sins? Has He who appoints the boundaries of our habitations, appointed ours where faith is put to the proof, and the need of Almighty grace more clearly demonstrated? Then, by that grace, that young Christian must stand; even there it may be with him as it was with the three children in the tyrant's furnace when it was heated seven times. The highest display of the power of truth, the brightest trophy to the triumph of grace, is to see some devoted believer holding fast the faith without wavering at the post of duty, alike against the scorn of the money-worshipper and the grossness of the unblushingly profane; and, blessed be God, his grace is sufficient even for that.

But farther: While the Christian, in his social intercourse, tries to shun the society of godless men, he is to make it plain that *he shuns, because he loves them*. We assume that that Christian *will* shun them; for he is bound to that by a law both in nature and in grace. But his motive is not that of spiritual pride. It has nothing akin to the feeling which dictated the words, "Stand by, for I am holier than thou;" nay, he is to show that he withdraws, because he cannot countenance what is ruinous to man and opposed to the mind of God. While we try to make religion felt, it must be the religion of love, and not of haughtiness or of bigotry. We

should remember that the world is a poor jaded world, and calls for pity rather than for wrath: its men have no resting-place either for the body or the soul; it has no antidote for its misery, no remedy for its disease. It is the shipwrecked seaman on his raft, trying to quench his burning thirst with the water of the ocean, only to make that thirst more burning still. It is the body weighed down with dropsy to the grave's edge, yet seeking relief in what only augments its misery. And all that should awaken pity for the world in our intercourse with it. Be it made plain, that we can be no parties to the world's ruin; we cannot trample on the Word of God to gratify the sinner's love of sin. Nay, if we be Christians indeed, if we have in us the spirit of Him who died for the ungodly, we must love the sinner too well to countenance him in his ways. Our shunning of him, wherever duty will permit, is to be our silent protest against what the holy God so emphatically describes as "drowning men in perdition." Love, wisdom, God, all demand that course.

And, to re-enforce all this, let it be remembered that we cannot associate of choice with wicked men without bringing our own religion into doubt. Our relish for communion with God is blunted. Our love to the holy and the pure is lessened. The world to come fades away into dimness, and even a child of God is thus prone to catch the world's spirit by intercourse *of choice* with worldly men. All this is notorious in regard to those haunts where the pride

of life is pampered, and where the children of folly squander in frivolity or guilt the hours which are given to prepare for eternity and its joys. But it is true also of more ordinary social intercourse; and the man who loves his own soul will guard, by the grace of God, against the first approach to the world's godless ways, as he would against the first drop in a poisoned cup, or the first inch of a stiletto.

We feel, however, that we must repeat the warning—Be sure that you display the religion of love, not of bigotry, in separating from the world. Let your light shine before men, but be sure that it is the true light—Heaven's.—There is a vessel sweeping across the deep. It is night, and her hundreds on board are locked in the insensibility of sleep. But suddenly there is a collision, a crash; her timbers are breaking up; and the hundreds who slept so securely a few breaths before, are now screaming out their agonies as they sink to rise no more. And what caused that disaster and these watery graves? The man at the helm just mistook the light, and, in doing so, hurried some hundreds into eternity. In like manner, we may exhibit a false phase of Christianity which shall tend only to ruin. It may not be God's light, but sparks which we ourselves have kindled, and these may only drive men nearer to destruction.

But hitherto we have done little more than attempt to show how and why they that fear God should separate from those who have no fear of Him

before their eyes. We have endeavoured to show that a godly man cannot go down to the world's level without dragging Christ's religion along with him. We have been urging the followers of the Saviour never to let the world think that the Christian and it are the same in their likings and pursuits. If we leave the world under that conviction, we have given an uncertain sound, and we have therefore endeavoured to make it plain that there is a broad, clear, deep line drawn by the Eternal God between the world and the church—between the converted and the unconverted—the man who lives for earth and the man who lives for God. They do not pass into each other by imperceptible shades, like the colours of the rainbow; they are separated like mid-day and midnight; they are different in nature, in liking, in pursuits, and in end.

All this, however, is only preparatory to telling how the godly should proceed in their intercourse with each other.—A prophet has said that “they who fear the Lord speak often one to another;” he has added, that “the Lord hearkens and hears,” and assured us, moreover, that “a book of remembrance is kept before the Lord for them that fear him and think upon his name.” Now, amid such employments, what can be the topics but the common salvation? What can engross the mind more than the death which Christ accomplished at Jerusalem, when he finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness? What but

the love of the Redeemer, and the mercies to which that love opened the way, can occupy such men's souls? Holiness, and its author, the Spirit; grace, and its fountain, God; its channel, the Redeemer; glory, and the Almighty One who made it sure by his blood; that which is perfect "when the former things shall have passed away;"—these and kindred topics may well animate the souls and strengthen the faith of the people of God. It is amid employments like these that their hearts may burn within them, like the hearts of the disciples while they walked with the Saviour to Emmaus. It is thus that foretastes of the heavenly joys are obtained, thus that clusters are brought from Eschol, and thus that the earnest of the purchased possession is at once secured and rejoiced in. To have a relish for such holy and hallowing employments, is a proof that we are born from above; our soul's native land is there; and to have no such relish is a proof that the soul is dead to the holiest and the noblest things.

But enough to have indicated this; none can completely fill up the sketch, for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love him." Still, however, where the truth or God is in the heart, it will well up. Attempts may be made to repress a gushing spring; but it will rise at another place, and another, and another, spreading verdure and fertility wherever it flows. Now, the truth in the heart is a well of water springing

up unto eternal life. It waters the waste, it purifies the vile, and fits us for that home where nothing that defiles can enter.

There is one sphere, that of married life, regarding which we offer a closing sentence. Considering the importance which is attached to that relation, and its mighty influences for good or ill, alike on our time and our eternity, nothing can surprise us more than the recklessness with which it is often formed. How rarely is the guidance of the Holy One sought! How little is his will consulted! How limited is the influence which eternal things are allowed to exert in the choice on either side! And who will marvel, then, if not a few make shipwreck of the faith and a good conscience, just at the threshold of their marriage-chamber? Who will wonder to see so many hearts broken, so many wives worse than widowed, so many children worse than orphans, the promise of godliness given in youth all blighted—the book, the house, the day of God, deserted? When He himself has been left out of view, it is as easy as the downward current of a stream, to abandon all besides.

But wherever the lamp of life illumines a soul, this relation should be peculiarly directed by it. The results are for life, nay, they are for eternity; and they who leave the Eternal God out of view in forming such a bond, are digging a pit into which they are sure to fall, or laying a snare in which they will assuredly be taken. The grace of God may win

such parties after all; but that can only be in His own holy sovereignty, according to his word, "I was found of them that sought me not," for the man who ventures here without the guidance of the Wonderful, the Counsellor, is gambling with a stake which may be eternal death.—Marriage was meant to double man's happiness, and, when contracted in the fear of God, it accomplishes his purpose; on other terms, its misery is unspeakable.

One closing sentence more. The difficulty and delicacy which are often felt in ordering our Social intercourse, makes a wise decidedness essential. To follow the right path implies self-denial; and, what is often worse, it may compel us to shun those whom we perhaps fondly love in the bonds of nature: Now, to arm us for this, we should call to mind that all the men who have signally served their God have been remarkable for decision—they were everywhere spoken against; their names were often a hissing and a byword, because they were decided for the ways of God against the ways of man. Paul was thus decided, and we know that, for his reward, he had to fight with wild beasts, and contend with wilder men. Luther was thus decided, and Romanists, in every age and land, have poured forth their enmity against him. Calvin was decided, and men have piled calumny upon calumny in their attempt to crush him. Knox was decided, and shared the same portion—he is sharing it still. Chalmers was decided, and had to live and die in armour. The

truth, and nothing but the truth of God, was their guide—

“Not the light which leaves us darker;
Not the gleams that come and go;
Not the mirth whose end is madness;
Not the joy whose fruit is woe.”—

The banner which the Eternal gave to be displayed, these men held up, that all might learn to rally round it; and the times on which we have fallen are such as require a wise decision, a holy boldness, a close walk with God, like the times of these heroes of the truth.

CHAPTER VIII.

RELIGION THE CROWN AND GLORY OF MAN'S LIFE.

THERE can be no doubt that one reason why so many keep religion far away from the heart, is the supposition that it offers no present pleasure. It holds out promises, but their fulfilment appears remote, and, men fear, uncertain. It tells of enjoyment, but that enjoyment springs from causes which myriads cannot comprehend, and the whole appears to be mystical, incomprehensible, or unreal. Such pleasure as the world can yield, the worldly mind can understand at once and cordially relish. It is at hand. It even solicits attention. It seems real and palpable as well as near. While religion appears to approach in the character of a jailor to imprison, rather than of a friend to set us free and spread out joys in endless succession before us, the world comes with sparkling bribes and with congenial joys. It promises freedom unbounded, and, like the silly bird which hastens to the blaze kindled by the fowler to attract it to his snare, souls in thousands are duped, and deceived; it may happen that they are undone for ever.

But were it possible to impart to such minds some taste of the pleasures which are enjoyed in the paths which are peace, it would instantly be seen what injustice their views inflict upon the truth. Its joys

are *not* projected into the distant future; they are nigh to us, they are even in our hearts. It does not give us a stone instead of bread, or a serpent instead of a fish—it is the world which imposes in that manner upon all who trust it. When religion comes to a worldly man to rob him of his gross or material joys, he fears that he is about to lose his all—because he knows no joy but what is earthly; and the very ways of God appear repulsive and irksome; not a few would imitate him who cried, “Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?” or, “hast thou come to torment us before the time?” But what *can* yield joy, if not the favour of God? What *can* spread sunshine through the soul, if not the sense of sin forgiven? What *can* impart true nobility, if not restoration to the image of God? What *can* give peace, if not the Prince of Peace? What *can* dry our tears or soothe our sorrows, if not He who came as a Comforter to earth, and who re-erects the kingdom of God in the soul? Amid all that plenitude of mercy, men may still persist in thinking that the truth is a bondage, and that its joys are shadowy or evanescent; but that can only be because their hearts have never bowed to the majesty or rejoiced in the love of their God.

And this repugnance to His truth is sometimes augmented, when religion begins to be contemplated with more care than the world commonly bestows on it. When men, for example, read the words—“Godliness is profitable unto all things,

having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come," their perplexities sometimes increase. That godliness has the promise of the life that is to come, multitudes may passively concede, for they bestow no thought upon the subject. But when their attention is drawn to the fact, that the promise farther embraces the life that now is, men are not prepared to acknowledge the truth. Godliness does not permit a man to ask, What will my fellow-mortals approve? Its all-decisive question is, What has God said? It never pauses to inquire, What will men think? what is current, or what is countenanced among them? It goes at once to the fountain-head, and seeks to ascertain what God has decided; what standard He has set up; what aim or end proposed. That once ascertained, the godly immediately feel bound thereby. They are in a court from which there is no appeal, or a hand from which there is no escape. Now, as they cannot do as others do, as they dare not pursue the world with the intense avidity of multitudes, how can it be true that godliness has the promise of the life that now is?

Moreover, are not the men called godly often hated, and persecuted, and of all men the most miserable? Is not this their promised lot—"In the world ye shall have tribulation;" or "The world shall laugh, but ye shall weep and lament?" How, then, can it be true, the question again and again recurs, that such buffeted men have the promise of the present life? Nay, does not an apostle himself confess, that,

in certain conditions, Christians may be of all men the most miserable?

With all these things, however, full in view, we still declare that the promise is true, and that no man really enjoys this world except the man of God. Whether it be in the Heart, that heart is the happiest whose godliness is greatest; or in the Home, that home is the most blessed where godliness is the most ascendant; or in the Workshop, that workshop is ever the best conditioned, and the most free from those things which rudely shock man's moral nature, where the fear of God is most felt; or in the Market-place, that business is ever the most healthy, the least exposed to panics or to failure, where the lamp of life, the Bible, sheds light upon our path. Gain without godliness is gold put into a bag with holes. It is a rusted and a moth-eaten thing; it eats the flesh as doth a canker.

Let us now, then, glance at religion in its general bearing upon the life of man on earth. It is the appointed Director of life; it is the Ornament and the joy of life; it is the prelude, the foretaste, or the earnest of the Life to come.—Viewed under these aspects, it may not be difficult to discover the folly of those who act in the spirit of Esau, and barter away their birthright for pleasures which perish in the using; or the wisdom of those who seek that righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, which are guaranteed to the Christian by an eternal covenant.

As the Director of life, then, it cannot be difficult to show that true religion is all-important.

Can we, in the nature of things, ever find a wiser guide than the only-wise God? Is not that man under some dire infatuation, who thinks that he can discover a safer? But true religion, the religion which the Spirit of God has embodied in the Bible, just consists in being under the guidance of the Holy One, in thought, word, and deed.

Can we, in the nature of things, ever find a path more pleasant than that in which the Eternal leads us? Now, the religion of truth just places us in the narrow path to glory opened up by God.

Can we be sane, and at the same time pretend to select a better standard, a better rule, a better aim, than that which God prescribes? Now, pure and undefiled religion just consists in making that standard, that rule, that aim, our own. Like the ship on the ocean, driven by the wind and tost, it may often seem as if all hope were gone; but if we be godly, that is, if we have religion in the heart as the Spirit of God plants it there, One comes to us even upon the angry waves, and his presence makes a calm. Whatever be our condition, here is a Guide. Whatever be our perplexity, here is a Counsellor. Whatever be our loneliness, here is a Friend. Whatever be our tendency to wander, here is one at our right hand, proclaiming, "I am the way." Could the heart of man be persuaded to follow the Lord fully, would he consult only for an

hour with reason, and with common sense, thousands more might be found in the path which leads to glory and to honour.

And let it be remembered that the directions which are given to guide the godly in the way are authoritative and divine. We have more than a royal road to heaven—we have a divine one. The man whose religion is planted in the heart, is not guided by opinions, but by verdicts ; and these are the verdicts of the unchanging One. They are not conjectures—they are the decisions of an infallible Judge ; they are the very maxims, the very laws by which we shall be tried, when we stand before the great white throne, and the Judge of the quick and the dead. Some men act as if they were at liberty to cancel the decisions of God ; to review them, and indorse or reverse them at pleasure. In this manner, the word of the Supreme, which he cannot alter without ceasing to be true, is made to bend to men's liking ; and if it will not bend, they break it. But the man who holds the lamp, and is therefore truly wise, makes it a maxim in his life that he cannot judge the Word of God—It judges him. He cannot bring his religion to the Bible—He must get his religion from it. He does not consult the sacred page with the view of welcoming or rejecting it at pleasure. Nay, it is the sovereign umpire in every perplexity. It is the director of his steps, and the sun of his soul. Guided by it, and by it alone, that man walks under the direction of the Father of lights, with whom is no

darkness at all, to that abode where the glory of God is manifested to all, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

They who have thus surrendered their souls to the guidance of God in his Word, have felt, in their own experience, how blessed it is to have Him for their light; they never yet were in a position for which the only wise God has not made provision; the lamp of life is always trimmed by the very hand which lit it.

—One is persecuted for righteousness' sake; the man who hates the truth appears anxious to "chase him up to heaven." But even then, the ear of faith can hear Him whom the world hated yet more, pronouncing a blessing over all who suffer in the paths of godliness.

One has had to follow child after child, or brother after brother, to the tomb; but has he not been told, perhaps at the edge of the grave, of Him who is the resurrection of the body and the life of the soul; and that them who sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him from the dead?

One has neither father nor mother, nor friend on earth to lean on—he is absolutely and utterly an orphan; but is he not told, "When father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up?" Is it not added, "I will not leave you orphans?"

One has cherished dreams of happiness on earth—he is expecting here what God declares we can never, never find. Well, He came, and proved that

his declaration was true; in mercy and in love he came, though the lacerated heart felt that the stroke was sore. The gourd withered. The frail reed broke. The shadow flitted away. The Word of God was verified, and the happiness of earth appeared rather like the lightning flash, than the steady shining of a summer day. But did not He who wounded heal? If that soul had godliness, was it not made apparent that the sovereign Lord of all had something in store for it better than it was choosing for itself?

One is tottering very near the grave. However he may cling to life, he cannot now be blind to the fact that the last resting-place of man must soon be a resting-place to him. But just then, just there, if that soul be godly, a light appears. It irradiates the tomb. It illumines the vast unknown beyond it; and almost in the language of a hosanna, such souls have passed away exclaiming, "To me to die is gain."

Or, last of all, one has felt, what many never feel, the sinfulness of sin. That soul has discovered how foolish as well as wicked it is, to contend against Omnipotence. It feels that man forsakes his own mercy by cherishing thoughts, or doing deeds opposed to the mind of God; and that as well may we expect comfort on the rack, or pleasure from the blaze which consumes us, as joy in that path which the Holy God has forbidden. According to the Word of the Lord, that soul has discovered what it is to be exposed to the wrath of God and of the Lamb; or how like the career of the suicide,

or the maniac, is the course of those who live in sin unpardoned, with a soul unsaved. But it has also discovered that the Word of God has devoted passage after passage, or Psalm after Psalm, to the subject of pardon. In one aspect, that is the burden of the Bible's lessons—to tell how free, how immediate, how complete, is the forgiveness provided by Him whose tender mercies are over all his other works. No entreaties so tender, no lessons so plain, no commands so cogent, no promises so full, as those which relate to the fountain opened for sin. The earnest soul thus discovers that the word is indeed a light to man's feet, and a lamp to his path. It is a light shining in a dark place—a directory from heaven for man on earth—the very God of truth is there pouring encouragement, or joy, or hope, into the heart.

When we buffet with a baffling tempest, how gladdening is the glimmer even of a lamp seen through the drift, telling us of comfort and of home! When we have long been driven by the waves and tost, so that hope has fled and exertion become paralysed, how welcome the haven of our rest! When strangers have long been our only associates in a foreign land, where no familiar face was near to greet us with its smile, how pleasant to know

“There is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come!”

—And how much more gladdening that Word of God which irradiates the path of a believer, a pillar

of cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night! In joy or in sorrow, in youth or in age, in his home, in his place of toil or of business, amid unceasing activities, or when the sands of life are ebbing low, such a man has a directory at every hour of need, a counsellor in every difficulty—enough to crown his weary life with a portion of the joy of his God.

We meet with some who have manifestly no guide but passion, or feeling, or human opinion. They therefore live in a state of constant fretfulness and mental fever, at once troubling and troubled. While others have an anchor cast within the veil, these men are driven by the wind and tost. Some are kept in perfect peace, even amid the agitations of life; they are like the little bird which is said to build its nest amid the breakers of the sea, and is most calm when perched on the crest of an angry wave. Others are like the restless sea; and whence this difference? The divine directory is in the hand of the one class; it is ignored or perverted by the other. The divine mind is the mind of the one; caprice and the changing passions of a troubled soul form the standard or the tyrant of the other. To the one, truth is truth, in the heart, the home, and the place of public resort; to the other, truth is but a name.—The bodies of those who live under a directly vertical sun, reflect no shadow; at least their shadow is under their feet, and these shadowless bodies are emblems of the condition of those who live nearest to the Sun of Righteousness: like the children of the

light, they are preparing for the world where there is neither shadow nor night.

But godliness is the Ornament of life as well as its Director.

And what is it that constitutes the beauty of a soul?—All that God has made is lovely according to its kind. Look at the little flower, and see what beauties beam upon us there. Contemplate the firmament above us, the meet type of Jehovah's immensity; and mark the surprising loveliness which is there. Or examine the winged insect which buzzes around us, only, perhaps, to vex and to annoy—there are more beauties and more marks of wisdom in that little thing, than the science of man has yet been able to tell. Now, if even these mean, these transient, and ephemeral things, are clothed in loveliness by God, may we not expect a more exquisite beauty in that immortal thing, the soul of man? It was once in the image of God; it is capable of wearing that image again. And what is it that constitutes its beauty?

We need not again reply—*It is holiness*. It is purity like the purity of God. It is perfection like his perfection. Sin at the first marred the moral beauty, and put all that is morally offensive in its stead. But a new creation takes place. The original loveliness begins to be restored. The beauties of holiness decorate the soul, and with the restoration of holiness the restoration of happiness begins. Give the unholy soul the wealth for which millions

pant; give it an empire like that of our sovereign, on which the sun never sets. Let all that can gladden and regale be poured into the cup of an ungodly man. The mere fact that he is unholy, would leave him deformed and unseemly; his soul would be wretched, craving, aching still.—A nobleman of ancient name and brilliant powers once ranked among the most conspicuous of all who dwelt in our land. He was admired by millions, and, for a time, was “followed, flattered, sought, and sued,” wherever he appeared. But he was slightly deformed in a limb; and when his eye fell on the deformity, even from the heights of his fame, he was chafed and chagrined: it was more than a counterbalance to all the incense which was offered to his powers. Now, that nobleman was as signal for his ungodliness as he was for his powers.

But, on the other hand, place a holy soul in a dungeon. Let the new, the holy nature which the Spirit of God imparts, be imparted to such a man. With that in his soul, let the persecutor wreathe his chains around him; let him “five times receive forty stripes save one;” let all men forsake him and flee;—still, by the grace of God, that soul would be made more like the Holy One by the very sorrows which it encountered and the tears which it shed: and it is thus that godliness becomes the ornament of life. As the rainbow would never be seen were it not for the clouds and the rain, the beauties of holiness would never shine so brightly were it not for the trials

which the Spirit of God employs to promote them. But *when* he employs them, the soul of man is changed into the image of the Redeemer, from glory to glory. Though covered by sin with wounds and bruises and noisome sores, it is created anew, after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness. The altogether lovely One becomes the model of that soul; and ornament after ornament is bestowed—such adornings as the eye of God can complacently regard, for they are the work of his own Spirit: they indicate the restoration of his handiwork, from the state of ruin into which it had lapsed, to the state of beauty in which it appeared when it sprang into being at his word.

It is holiness, then, that is the ornament of man. Without that, no mental power, no constellation of gifts, can give beauty to our spirits, as they are seen by God. Knowledge may be power; but it is only the power of evil. Acquirements may be extensive; but they are only like gaudy trappings on a hearse, or music in a dying man's chamber, unless truth in the heart become holiness in the life.

But when Christianity is planted in the heart and soul of man, it becomes his Joy as well as his director and ornament. This is sunshine; all besides is gloom.

Upon this we need not expatiate long. It is manifest as day to all who have submitted to the guidance of reason illumined by the lamp of life, the Bible, that Christianity introduces us to the highest joy of

earth or heaven, even joy in the Holy Ghost; and while destitute of that, whatever he may possess, man is wretched, and miserable, and blind. One man seeks happiness in sin; but did he ever find it? Nay, is it not like taking fire to his bosom? Is it not like a wound to his immortal nature? O, is it not a mournful delirium, to dream of finding joy in that which caused the creation of a place of torment—which doomed a world to misery—which digs our graves—which lays us in them, and fills our homes from time to time with the voice of lamentation and woe?

Another man seeks joy in wealth; but after he has all that he can grasp, is not his heart still, like the daughters of the horse-leech, crying, "Give, give?" As well attempt to satisfy the hungry body with the name of bread, as the craving soul with material things. It was created to be happy in God; and, without him, the universe cannot fill the void in man's heart.

Another seeks joy in friendship, or in beautiful human affection. But remorseless death comes: he strikes down the object to which affection clings; and where is the bereaved one now? He is well-nigh wearying for the grave, and so of all that begins and ends on earth: its blossom goes up like rottenness at last. It is simply impossible that any object whose root is in the dust can gladden the soul of man, apart from the God who made it.

Has God, then, left us without joy? When we became idolators, did he leave us to our idols, to

tears, and woe? Nay, there is blessedness even here below; and the knowledge, the fear, the love, and favour of God, is its fountain-head. In reconciliation to Him—in His image restored—in growing holiness—in greater and yet greater love and likeness to the Saviour of the soul—the man of God, the man who is truly rational, finds the streams of his joy. God himself is the fountain; but his blessings are the rills which flow from it: and he who has not felt this joy, is still living among shadows, and phantoms, and names. His is only the comb rifled of the honey; his is the dream without the reality; his the corruption and the death of sin, without the pleasures which flow from God into the soul.—Is the land of his fathers a source of joy to the returning exile? Is the breath of spring a source of gladness to man's fevered brow? Is the face of nature a source of pleasure to him who has long been immured amid the damps of a dungeon? Far more than all these together, is a sense of God's favour to the soul which has returned from its wanderings, to seek its blessedness again on the bosom of its God.

And it is to godliness, or at least some counterfeit of it, that all, or nearly all, men flee for joy at last. Some, indeed, die like the beasts that perish, without either fear or joy. Conscience is dead before the body. It occasions no alarm; and such men pass into the presence of the Judge perhaps denying his very existence. But not so all. When conscience is

aroused from its long stupor by the nearness of death, how eager do some appear for the joy which religion promises! how gladly would they now grasp at what they have practically despised, perhaps for threescore years and ten! There is one who has spent a lifetime in denying the truth as it is in Jesus. He declared that he hated the Saviour's very name, and did all that wit and powers the most diversified could accomplish to blot it from the hearts and memories of men. That man hated the truth with a perfect hatred, and gloried in his hatred; it secured for him the applause of myriads who felt that truth to be fettering, and who rejoiced in the help of one so gifted in their attempt to banish it from the earth.—But that man is dying at last, and all is changed now. Goaded by conscience, he flees to a poor superstition—he tries to soothe his soul by believing one of the most enormous impositions ever practised upon man. He eats what he reckons, or what an abject superstition teaches him to regard as “the body, the blood, and the divinity” of Him whom he had so long blasphemed and denied; and that very superstition of that dying infidel* tells where it is that man finds or tries to find his joy after all. It is just an infidel's method of proclaiming, “Godliness has the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

Or if we refer to a case less extreme than that of an avowed infidel, the same truth appears—the same

* It was Voltaire.

lesson is taught. God and his favour alone can gladden or satisfy the soul.

Another man, then, not less distinguished in his day than Voltaire, is passing on to his great account. Millions in many lands have admired his genius, and offered incense to his name. Wherever he moves he is followed by applauding crowds; and if ever there was one who might have been satisfied with the homage of his fellow-mortals, that was the man. Princes deemed themselves honoured by being under his roof. Royalty set him at its right hand. He added field to field. He determined to make for himself a local habitation, as he had already made for himself a name; and his mansion, once modest and humble, grew into "a romance in stone."

But the fashion of this world vanishes away, and that man must die. Before he leaves the scenes which his presence had long invested with smiles, he must read a lesson to man—had man a heart to learn it—more salutary and profound than any he had ever tried to teach. The wind of adversity blew, and shattered his fortunes and his hopes together. Death entered his abode, and one who had long been its joy was carried to the tomb. Then affliction laid its hand upon himself. The body was palsied, the mind a wreck; and amid all this, that man's spasmodic efforts to resume his former self, rank among the most touching incidents in the chequered history of humanity. But we must listen to his own words to learn his tale of woe, and see how broken is every earthly

cistern when man seeks joy from it apart from God; how shadowy and dream-like is every earthly thing apart from Him who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

“When I think,” says this idol of millions, on the eve of leaving his home at the bidding of stern necessity and financial pressure; “when I think what this place now is, compared with what it has been not long ago, I think my heart will break. Lonely, aged, deprived of all my family, I am an impoverished and embarrassed man.”

Farther, he thus touchingly wails: “Death has closed the dark avenue of love and friendship. I look at them as through the grated door of a burial-place, filled with monuments of those who once were dear to me, and with no other wish than that it may open for me at no distant period.”

And as if to show that all his anguish did not come from without, the great Novelist says, “Some new object of complaint comes every moment. Sick-nesses come thicker and thicker; friends are fewer and fewer. The recollection of youth, health, and power of activity neither improved nor enjoyed, is a poor strain of comfort. The best is, the long halt will arrive at length, and close all.”*

Now, it will be noticed in these extracts that it is

* Sir Walter Scott. The closing chapter of his *Life* by J. G. Lockhart ranks among the most melancholy and instructive portions of our literature. Could aught but a divine power undeceive the sons of men, these chapters might undeceive them.

the grave which closes the vista of that greatly gifted man; at least he never refers to the bright ulterior of which the tomb might be the portal.—“I have no other wish than that the grated door of a burial-place may open for me at no distant period.”—“The best is, the long halt will arrive at length, and close all”—it is there that the mind seems to rest. It never rises into the region of immortality. It does not refer to that favour of God which is life. As far as these mournful records tell, that soul had nothing to repose on but what was soon to enwrap the body—the earth, and earthly things. Dazzled even to blindness by the mimic immortality which man bestows on man, the life and immortality of the Gospel were ignored. Steeped in the possessions which only increase the thirst which some suppose they quench, that man discovered and confessed that he was “an impoverished and embarrassed man,” when he might have exulted in the unspeakable gift, the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Now, it is thus that men sow the wind and reap the whirlwind, by expecting that joy from things which are seen and temporal, which can be found only in the things which are unseen and eternal; and it is thus that the men who

“ Hunt their misery with a zeal to die ”

proclaim to all who have ears to hear, that if we would have joy to the full, and blessings such as can satisfy the soul, they must be sought in Him who is

our peace, "of whom and to whom are all things." "Surely he is, or ought to be, a happy man," said a visiter at Sir Walter Scott's abode. "When I think of what it is now . . . I think my heart will break"—is his own dirge-like response.

But it is not merely in the high concerns of eternity that a man of God finds sources of joy. Even amid the cares and distractions of earth, he has often a peace which is independent of all earthly sources. He sees God in all events, and soon discovers that they all work together for his good: however diverse in their origin or aspect, they sweetly blend into one harmonious whole, of which blessedness is the product to a child of God. Think of the complex machinery which pours such wealth into the lap of our nation, by multiplying manifold its productive power. How intricate in its parts! how apparently incomprehensible to an inexperienced mind; yet how simple, how exquisitely beautiful in its *results*! Or think of the sunlight in which all nature rejoices. It can be decomposed into seven primary elements, yet how simple and how lovely is the product of their combination! And so it is in the various events of providence: they all blend into one harmonious result; they are all presided over by our Father who is in heaven; and they all pour into the soul of a believer more real joy than the world can know, even "when its corn and its wine are increased."

But the crown and consummation of the whole is,

that godliness is not merely the Director, the Ornament, or the Joy of this life; it is the prelude to the Life that is to come.

What are to be our employments in heaven? How shall we be sustained? How perceive, or feel, or rejoice? Shall we recognise in glory those whom we loved on earth?—or is the Alpha and the Omega of faith, the Alpha and the Omega of fruition? These, and a thousand other questions, are raised by the curious mind; but the most that we can say in reply is, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.” There will be praise in glory. There will be following the Lamb. There will be satisfaction with God’s likeness. There will be the fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore. But after all, the mind, while in the body, is exhausted by the effort to comprehend what we shall be: it falls back fatigued upon the words of him who once lay on the Redeemer’s bosom, “It doth not yet appear what we shall be.”

And yet there is a sense or a measure in which we can understand heaven.—In our day we hear much of the Millennium. Churches are divided on the subject. Brother differs from brother; and it is difficult indeed, definitely to fix “what saith the Lord” regarding it. But connected with the millennium there is one subject, concerning which we may speak with perfect decision on the undoubted authority of God. As the whole is composed of its parts, the blessedness of the millennial state can be composed only of the blessedness of individual souls. Now, would

I introduce that blessed era as far as I am concerned? Then let me make sure that Christ is already personally reigning in me. Would I see the kingdom of God set up in our groaning world; and would I like to fix a day for its commencement? Then let me *this day* make it sure that the king of glory is on the throne of my heart, that "Christ is in me the hope of glory."—Whatever the millennium is to be, or whensoever it is to begin, it can, at the most, consist only of Christ's personal reign. Now, he should be reigning at this hour in me. Be that, through grace, accomplished, and we are in preparation for the millennial glory; though the bright visions of some were turned into realities to-morrow, we should be found meet to enter on the joy of our Lord. "The millennium will never come," said Harlan Page, "till Christians are more awake to duty."

And so of the eternal state. Does Christ reign in any soul now? Then, beyond the grave, that reign perfected will be heaven. Is Christ stamping on us now the image of the Eternal, and restoring what the fall ruined or effaced? Then that restoration completed will be heaven. Is Christ on earth showing us the Father? Then beyond the grave, we shall be eternally restored to the Father's favour; and that is heaven, for his favour is life, and his loving-kindness better than life. Our joy on earth—our religion—when it is a fruit of the Spirit, is at once a preparative and a prelude to the joys of heaven. They are the same in kind, and differ only in degree. He that

is holy in a measure now, will be holy in perfection at last. He that loves the Saviour in a measure now, will love him in perfection beyond the grave; here we see the bud, on high we shall partake of the ripe and mellow fruit—all according to the words, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."

Let us try to find some one who is ignorant of the great processes of nature; one of the untutored savages who still hover near the margin which separates the rational from merely animal nature. Let him be ignorant, for example, of the processes of vegetation. With the one hand show him an acorn—a thing so small that it can scarcely serve even for an infant's toy; with the other, show him some majestic oak, beneath whose ample shade the beasts of the field and the birds of the air find a common shelter. Then tell that degraded one, that that majestic tree was once enveloped in such a little seed—how incredulous, or how amazed, would that "Stoic of the woods" appear!

And the same thing happens in regard to the coming eternity. Godliness is the germ, of which eternal glory is the majestic result. Grace is the bud, of which heaven is the ample fruitage. Like the darkling savage, we may be unable to comprehend the process by which the one passes into the other. But our ability is not the measure of God's.

The one *does* pass into the other; grace does pass into glory; and he is wise, he *only* is wise, who makes it his business on earth to tend that germ, or screen it from all that would crush or destroy it. He is wise who places it often in the clear shining of the Sun of Righteousness, or under the influence of Him who assures us that he will refresh it like the dew. The delicate exotic will not otherwise grow; and for want of such tending, ten thousand times ten thousand let it wither, and pine, and perish.

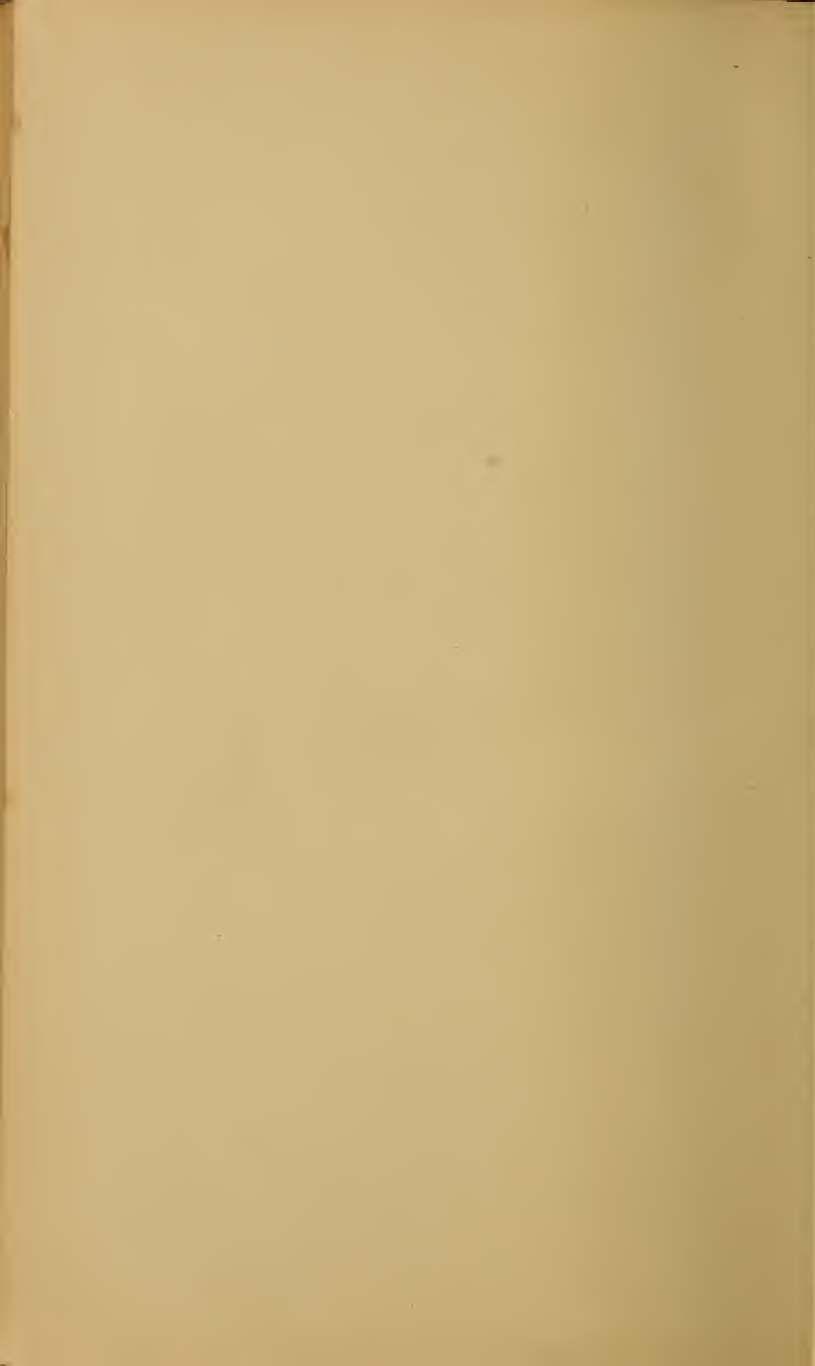
It is a saddening thing to stand by the edge of the open grave, and see dust returned to the dust. One, perhaps, with whom we have often taken sweet counsel, upon whose arm we have leant, whose soul has touched our soul, with whom we had all things in common, even to the secrets of the heart, is entombed. The cold earth must hide him, and even affection must hasten to bury him out of sight. But that very body thus consigned to corruption is yet to come forth a glorious body, when death shall be swallowed up of life. That which is sown in dishonour is to grow in glory, if united to Him who is the resurrection and the life, who has abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light in the gospel. Its home for ever is to be—

“The city of the golden pavement—
Seat of endless festival.”

—And thus do we glance at the Spirit's fruit in the soul—or God's religion, not man's—as the crown and consummation of life. We have looked at it as

it *should* reign in the Heart: *Does* it reign there? We have studied it as presiding in our Homes, and leading all who are there in the "way of the Lord:" To what extent has that been accomplished? We have gone, with the lamp of life in our hand, into the Workshop of the artisan, and tried to tell how it ennobles toil by sanctifying him who toils. We have taken that lamp, and tried to shed its light upon the Marts of business; and is it the case that our merchandise and our hire are holiness to the Lord? We have referred to what should be the ascendancy of God's truth in our Social Intercourse; and if it preside there, we are not far from the kingdom of heaven; nay, we are within its sacred borders, and the crown of all will be glory, honour, and immortality, through Jesus Christ our Lord.









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